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SIR JOSHUA AND HIS CIRCLE

VOL. I

Allen & Co (London) Ltd. Sc.

Sir Joshua Reynolds

From a mezzotint by James Watson after the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

SIR JOSHUA AND HIS CIRCLE

BY

FITZGERALD MOLLOY

Author of "The Russian Court in the Eighteenth Century,"
"The Romance of Royalty,"
"The Sailor King," &c.

WITH 2 PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECES AND
16 FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS ON ART PAPER

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PREFACE

BIOGRAPHIES of Sir Joshua Reynolds have already been written in which he is presented as a single figure uplifting and enriching his art; but in these pages the first President of the Royal Academy is regarded rather as a central luminary in the surprising and splendid constellation of genius, such as had never before his time and has never since illumined this country.

Among that glorious galaxy, in Sir Joshua's own profession, were such lights as William Hogarth, the robust realist of his age; Thomas Gainsborough, superlatively great and singularly unbalanced; Benjamin West, once a member of the Society of Friends and subsequently an assiduous courtier; the timid neurotic Romney, unsurpassed in his art, abject in his admiration of a courtesan; Angelica Kauffmann, a practical sentimentalist; Richard Cosway, miniature painter and mystic, together with his clever wife who having deserted became devoted to him; Richard Wilson, the creator of exquisite and unsaleable landscapes; James Barry, eccentric to the verge of madness; Henry Fuseli, who appreciated his

title of Principal Hobgoblin Painter to His Satanic Majesty; and John Opie, the marvellous lad out of Cornwall. Side by side with these were players beginning with David Garrick and ending with Sarah Siddons; while literature was represented among others by Samuel Johnson; Oliver Goldsmith; Henry Fielding; Samuel Richardson; Laurence Sterne; Tobias George Smollett; Richard Brinsley Sheridan; and Fanny Burney; an amazing group in all.

Nor was Sir Joshua's circle limited to the intellectuals; for it included women of fashion, men of rank, great statesmen, and distinguished ministers; his friendly relations with whom were not limited to the studio. No attempt has been made in these volumes to criticize the genius of the painters, players, or writers mentioned; but in speaking of them, the aristocracy of talent, as well as in speaking of the aristocracy of rank, the human side of their characters has been considered, its weakness—the recognition of which in others declares them kinsfolk of our friends—left quite uncovered. Labour has not been spared in an effort to reproduce the atmosphere of the multicoloured world in which they lived.

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SIR JOSHUA AND HIS CIRCLE

CHAPTER I

The arrival in London of the Plymouth coach—One of the passengers young Joshua Reynolds—His walk to Great Queen Street and the house of Thomas Hudson, portrait painter—Stays with his uncle in the Temple—His parentage and home at Plympton St. Maurice—A quaint old town—His father a philosopher, scholar, astrologer, and master of the Grammar School—Joshua's first attempts at drawing—Jonathan Richardson and Thomas Hudson, artists—Joshua's future calling is decided on—He leaves home for London—Letters from his father—Fleet Street and the Strand in the eighteenth century—Some notable shops and the figures that frequented them—Joshua enters on his apprenticeship as an artist—Paints a portrait that is superior to those of his master—Jealousy of the latter leads to Joshua's leaving him—His return home—Paints portraits at Plymouth—He is introduced to Commodore Augustus Keppel, who invites him to cruise with him—Goes to Algiers and sees the Dey—Keppel's answer to the latter—Joshua at Minorca—Reaches Rome—Attitude of English people to works of art—James Edward Stuart and his son Henry Cardinal York—Joshua fails to appreciate Raphael—Travelling through Umbria—His stay at Florence and Venice—His return to England.

THE journey which had covered some two hundred and fifty miles and had lasted several days, at length came to an end when at noon on Saturday

13 October 1740, the Plymouth coach with flourishing sound of horn, of ostentatious whip-cracking, the quick roll of wheels, and the ring of horses' hoofs, left the final trace of open field, hedgerow, and market-garden behind, rattled past Burlington House, then and for many years later the last dwelling westwards of Piccadilly, and was received with cheers as it drew up in front of the old White Horse Cellar, close by Arlington Street. Its arrival added to the general bustle and movement surrounding that famous hostelry, for other stage coaches, filled inside and out with those about to travel, were ready for departure to various towns in the West of England; their guards in scarlet coats and white beaver hats; rosettes at their horses' heads; their necessary blunderbusses dry and in safe keeping in the well; a crowd of dark-faced clamorous Jews skirting them, offering cakes and oranges for sale to their passengers.

At first sound caught by him of the Plymouth coach horn, and before the coach had reached his door, the proprietor of the White Horse Cellar, honest John Rogers, cheery-faced, red-cheeked, and of ample girth, had come forward to fling a word of greeting to the coachman, while stable boys and ostlers unharnessed the steaming, lather-flaked horses, handy men transferred innumerable packages and baskets from roof to ground, and a score of welcoming friends helped the

passengers they had waited for to alight. Among them was one to whom no hand was outstretched, to whom no greeting was addressed, as dismounting he stretched stiff limbs, looked round with eyes blinking from insufficient sleep, and while waiting for his modest baggage stamped his feet by way of circulating his chilled blood.

This was none other than Joshua Reynolds who had just entered his eighteenth year. His slight upright body in its wide-collared, close-waisted, deep-skirted coat; his thin legs in breeches and home-knitted stockings; his feet in buckled shoes; showed a figure which was still that of a lad—a comely lad, notwithstanding the pitted marks on his florid round face, wide of forehead, the nose thick, the chin rounded, the eyes wide open and grey-blue, its general expression showing kindliness, refinement, and a sense of dignity seldom seen in the young. He was not alone, for with him was Tom Cutcliffe, some years his senior, the son of a country solicitor showing neighbourly interest in the Reynolds family; himself a solicitor with some knowledge of London, and therefore fitted to act as companion and guide to one wholly strange to it.

On Joshua's baggage being shouldered by a porter, he set out with his friend for Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn, where lived Thomas Hudson the portrait painter to whom he had come to serve his

apprenticeship. Crossing Leicester Fields, as the spot now famous for its music-halls was then called, they passed through Long Acre—then as to-day a centre of the coach-building industry—skirted the top of Bow Street with its very good houses well inhabited, though no longer by gentry as at an earlier date, came into Drury Lane, whose theatre the lad looked on as on a building sacred to great achievements in art which had found an echo in his native town, and so reached Great Queen Street. Marvelling at the movement, noise, and wonders of a city seen for the first time, Joshua Reynolds walked in silence beside his companion through streets thronged with citizens, among them many hawkers of news sheets, ballads, and political squibs; of fruits and vegetables piled in baskets carried on stout backs; of wearing apparel, pens, ink, paper, and wafers; and of various domestic commodities—each hawker having a cry peculiar to him or her self, musical and with long-drawn cadences. The side paths which at this time were not paved, but were protected by stout posts from the incursions of hackney coaches and lumbering carts, were skirted by gutters generally malodorous, while the space beside these gutters and furthest from the side paths was considered the most fitting repository for ashes, oyster-shells, the entrails of fish and fowls, and of dirt of all kinds, for it was not until 1762 that dustmen were first introduced to the town.

Wary and watchful Joshua and his friend took the centres of the streets, believing it safer to keep at a distance from the houses out of whose windows at any moment unsavoury liquids might be flung in an effort to reach the gutters, their way being at times disputed by hackney coaches, driven by men in coats with many capes; by the coaches of the nobility, ponderous vehicles suspended on leather straps; and above all by the bearers of sedan-chairs, choleric men with legs proverbially unsteady, and famous for their richly-flavoured vocabulary, inspired by the same source which had given flamboyant hues to their features. Great Queen Street to which they made their way, had in the comparatively recent days of the Stuarts been one of the most fashionable parts of the town, though at this time the descendants of great lords and famous ministers who had resided there had moved westwards, leaving their splendid houses built after designs by Inigo Jones, with spacious halls, high-ceilinged, oak-panelled rooms, and fronts ornamented with brick pilasters and rich capitals, to such tenants as James Hoole, the admired translator of Tasso and Ariosto; to Worlidge famous for his etching in the manner of Rembrandt; to Sir Godfrey Kneller who had died here just seventeen years previous to Joshua Reynolds' first visit to town; to Kitty Clive and other players sufficiently prosperous like herself, to rent them.

At this time the numbering of houses not having been adopted, some slight difficulty was experienced in discovering that of Hudson; on finding which a disappointment awaited Joshua, who was told that the artist was painting the portraits of some patrons at Bath, whence he was expected to return soon. Meantime there was nothing left for Joshua but, under the guidance of Tom Cutcliffe, to seek his uncle the Rev. John Reynolds who had chambers in the Temple. Here he was welcomed, and here he remained until Hudson's return, when he took up his residence in the painter's house and became a member of his family as was the custom with apprentices at that time.

As he lay in bed that night in the Temple, it must have seemed to this thoughtful and ambitious lad as if he had gained the first step in a career to which he had looked eagerly forward. But no matter to what great event it might lead, like all others of importance in life, this had not been taken without pain; the pain of severance from those he loved and who loved him; from a circle, from associations, and from scenes of which he had been part, knitted to each by ties and by customs from which the demands of life had wrenched him, and in which he could never resume his place as before, never return with the old happy illusions of his boyhood, never look upon familiar things with the same eyes as he had seen them.

Born "about half an hour after nine," on the morning of the 16th of July 1723, Joshua was the seventh child of the Rev. Samuel Reynolds and his wife Theophila, a simple kindly God-fearing couple, both the descendants of parsons, and at this time living their quiet lives in the little town of Plympton St. Maurice in Devonshire. A primitive place of nine hundred inhabitants, lying apart from the world in the fertile valley of the Plym between the wooded hills of Saltram and Boringdon, its twin long streets numbered two hundred houses, red roofed, quaintly gabled, with dormer windows, many of them being built on arcades extending over the footway. Chief among them stood the Guildhall, its council chamber supported by arcades resting on granite columns, and its Grammar School also resting on arches, making an arcade where on wet days the scholars ran and played, the sound of their shrill voices echoing through the town. Slightly withdrawn from these streets, through which the scent of hay swept in early summer, the dewy odour of woods in winter, stood the church surrounded by a green space sheltered by plane and poplar, where many slept in peace. Formerly a chantry chapel dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket, time-stained, dignified, and reverend, its south porch showing a vaulted roof and parvis chamber, its doubled-storied tower with granite buttresses ivy-clad at one side, it must have delighted

the eyes of Sir Christopher Wren who in the days of James II was member of Parliament for this ancient town. Dominating it from a lofty mound rose the castle, built before the Norman Conquest, and at this time preserving a portion of its keep ; an eerie place associated with the supernatural, and near which none dared venture by night save one, the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, who made it the constant scene of his meditations, the place from which he watched the stars, and where he lost himself in the contemplation of celestial immensity.

From this something of his character may be gathered. A sweet-tempered man of gentle and sober manner, he was a scholar, a philosopher, a student of physic believing in the healing power of herbs, a man exquisitely sane though darkly suspected of eccentricity if not worse because of his belief in astrology. Though he had taken Orders, he was not the incumbent of Plympton, but held the more humble and less lucrative post as master of the Grammar School to which a stipend of eighty pounds a year was attached. Bringing up a family on this sum, eleven children having been born to him, he and they must have known the straits of poverty, but withal he was respected by his neighbours and loved, though the latter feeling was tinctured by awe of his practice of astrology, especially when having predicted from her horoscope the danger which threatened his little

daughter Theophila on a certain day, and having locked her with her nurse in a room that a fatality might be avoided, the child fell from a window and as a result died the same evening.

But so poor were the family that neither pencils nor paper could be afforded to the children who therefore used to draw with burnt sticks on whitewashed walls; Joshua's efforts being so inferior to those of his sisters and brothers at this time that they called him the clown. His progress must have been rapid, for at the age of eight, having read a treatise on perspective, he applied its rules to a drawing he made of the school arcades that greatly astonished his father. This was done with one of the pencils given to the children by a friend of their mother, greatly to Joshua's delight, for pencil in hand he from this time continually employed himself copying the prints in the books of his father's modest library, the engravings in Dryden's edition of Plutarch's Lives among others, and even at school making drawings on the back of his Latin exercises, "out of pure idleness," as his father wrote underneath one of them. Nay, with his finger dipped in ink he produced likenesses of his fellow scholars, and at the age of twelve made a recognizable portrait of the Rev. Thomas Smart, from a surreptitious sketch taken of his victim while he preached in church.

This was done at the suggestion of the clergyman's

high-spirited pupil, a lad eight years older than Joshua, young Dick Edgcumbe, son of the first Baron Edgcumbe, who was a friend and patron of the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, and whose residence, Mount Edgcumbe, was in the neighbourhood. This picture which is still in existence and is the first painted by Joshua in oils, was executed from the sketch made in church, in a boat-house on the Cremyll beach under Mount Edgcumbe, on a piece of an old boat-sail, and with paint used for boats. Later his imagination was excited and his enthusiasm for art roused by reading An Essay on the Theory of Painting, and An Essay on the Whole Art of Criticism in Relation to Painting, by Jonathan Richardson, an artist of great repute in his day who had passed into retirement at this time. In connexion with him it may be mentioned that the prettiest of his four daughters fell in love with the cleverest of his pupils, Thomas Hudson, who believing that Richardson's consent to their marriage could not be obtained, eloped with and married the girl. Forgiveness followed, and the younger artist started for himself in life.

On the retirement of his father-in-law, Thomas Hudson became known as the best portrait painter in England. Such a position however gave him no claim to immortality except in his own estimation, for in his time art was at its lowest ebb in this

country, and specimens of his work considered excellent in his day, are by the light of modern judgment seen to be merely correct, well-coloured drawings of a wooden-headed humanity, unenlightened by character, with no suspicion of soul, but handsomely clad, and posing with uncomfortable stiffness in sumptuous surroundings, which were painted by his assistants Van Haecken and Ramsey. Hudson's work was however considered admirable by those whose knowledge of art was not extensive; and among his most successful portraits are those of Charles, second Duke of Marlborough, which hangs in Blenheim Palace; of George II, which is in the National Portrait Gallery; of Handel, which is in the same place; and of the great Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole, which it is interesting to learn was "entirely to his satisfaction."

Thomas Hudson was a native of Devon, a county that has given birth to a number of artists, and at times journeyed from London to visit Bideford, not far from Plympton St. Maurice. In the former town there lived at this time a kinsman of Joshua's mother, one Mr. Baker a doctor, and Mr. Cutcliffe, an attorney, a friend of his father's. Through them news came of the great man who had painted the King's Majesty and his courtiers—news which the simple folk of Plympton St. Maurice must have greatly relished in days when even the meagre news

sheets seldom travelled so far from the capital. It was therefore natural that his name should occur to the master of the grammar school when on his son Joshua reaching his seventeenth year, some decision had to be made regarding his future career.

For a while the Rev. Samuel Reynolds was undecided as to whether he should make an apothecary and medical practitioner or an artist of his seventh child. Knowing that medicine was more essential to the British constitution than art, he believed that a certain if limited income could be made by the former, while doubting if starvation could be avoided by the practice of the latter. On Joshua being asked which he would select, his answer was "he would much rather be an apothecary than an ordinary painter, but if he could be bound to an eminent master, he would choose to be a painter." As the anxious father discussed the boy's future one evening while smoking a friendly pipe with his well-to-do neighbour Mr. Craunch, the latter suggested that he should write to their friend Mr. Cutcliffe at Bideford, asking if he would on the first occasion possible find out if Thomas Hudson would take Joshua as an apprentice. To this his hearer readily consented, and in writing next day stated that "Joshua has a very great genius for drawing, and lately on his own head has begun even painting, so that Mr. Warmell who is both a painter and a player, having lately seen but his first

performances said, if he had his hands full of business he would rather take Joshua for nothing than another with fifty pounds." The letter, after broaching his subject quaintly ends: "Now here I have given you a naked account of the matter upon which I most desire your judgment and advice. I must only add that what Joshua had principally employed himself in has been perspective, of which perhaps there is not much in face painting; his pictures strike off wonderfully if they be looked on with a due regard to the point of sight and the point of distance. You see how free I make with you. I am your most affectionate friend and servant, Samuel Reynolds."

The Bideford attorney agreed to recommend Joshua as an apprentice, as it was called in those days, to Hudson; but haste being an unknown element in such reposeful days, it was not until seven months had passed that a definite decision in the matter was arrived at, and the great London portrait painter agreed to receive the lad as his apprentice for four years at a premium of one hundred and twenty pounds. To a man supporting a family on eighty pounds a year this sum must have seemed considerable; but his belief in the lad's talents induced him to make what sacrifice he could for Joshua's benefit. The money was not required to be paid down, so that time was given for him to collect half of it, the other half being found by his eldest daughter Mary,

married to Mr. Palmer a solicitor, and living in comfort at Torrington, on the condition that Joshua should repay her when able.

All being settled the boy's modest wardrobe chiefly consisting of shirts and stockings made and knitted at home, was made ready by his mother who was saddened that one of her children was leaving her wing and going out into a world which was dreaded the more because unknown to her. His father was likewise grieved at parting from a favourite child even while he strove to reconcile himself with the thought that such severances are inevitable to parents, and with the hope that Joshua's talents would bring him some share of success. The date fixed for his leaving his home was October 7th, 1740, a clear day as it proved, sunlight revealing in patches the rich colour of autumn woods, the dull red roofs of houses in the straggling streets lifting gables and dormer windows against azure skies. With many kisses and embraces his mother and sisters parted from him, his father gripping his hand and speaking homely advice in a voice from which emotion could not be suppressed. Then climbing into the conveyance that was to carry him to Bideford, Joshua waved farewells to a group which he saw but dimly. A few turns of the wheels and he had passed from sight, and for that day and many days yet to come, the absence of his face from table, the absence of his footsteps on stair or floor, made the

loneliness more pressing on the narrow lives of those he had left behind.

With him he carried to Bideford a letter addressed by his father to Mr. Cutcliffe, which said: "As my son is come to wait on you and to obey orders, I have nothing to do but to thank you for your management and trouble in this affair. Everything that is necessary to be said, my son will be better able to say by word of mouth. Only one thing lest it should be forgot, which your son may be best able to determine, whether Joshua may suffer any prejudice hereafter by being bound for four years (which undoubtedly in itself is preferable) instead of seven; if so, then I suppose alterations may be made without any additional charge, for Joshua's work will then be worth his diet. Things are much better as they are without any alteration, unless there be a real inconvenience therein, as that he will not be able to practise his trade in London without molestation, or enjoy any other privileges which seven years 'prentices do."

On the sixth day from that on which he had left his home Joshua reached London without hindrance from highwaymen, breakdowns, or other incidents common to such journeys at this time. For five days he lodged with his uncle, during which time he had an opportunity of seeing the town, especially that part in which he stayed—the Temple, with its beautiful round church of the Knights Templars; Fountain

Court, with its little fountain trickling through day and dark; the various courts with their stone fronts grey and dignified; the secluded Middle Temple garden with its velvet lawn where it was then the custom of the leading counsel and other legal luminaries to walk on summer evenings, dressed as if for an assembly, in white satin small-clothes and silk stockings, high-heeled shoes, ruffles and cocked hats, while they told strange tales that sparkled with wit, and roared with laughter.

Straying from the precincts of the Temple, Joshua, wide-eyed with wonder, must have marvelled at the sights he saw. Built of Portland stone, black with smoke and grim from association, stood Temple Bar with its gates dividing Fleet Street from the High Street of Westminster, more commonly called the Strand; iron spikes in rows above, on which not long before had been fixed the heads of some who considered William of Orange to have usurped the English throne; and on which five years later the blood-stained and staring-eyed heads, with fixed grimaces and hair blowing in the wind, of those devoted to the Stuart cause, were to rot in rain and sun and blacken in fog and grime. On either side of Temple Bar, Fleet Street and the Strand stretched, narrow, crowded, and picturesque, their houses with high-pitched roofs, gabled, and with projecting upper stories fronted by plaster on which designs were

stamped, or by wood beamed and carved. From them, hanging above the doorways and the heads of passengers, were innumerable signs blazing with rich colours and gilded, representing strange devices and emblems: rampant lions, red, blue, and green; formidable and fiery dragons, saints, boars and bears, cocks, falcons, eagles, monkeys, and the fabulous creatures of heraldry. On days when winds were high, these signs creaked on their rusty hinges, swung heavily to and fro, and occasionally fell with fatal effect; for it was not till twenty-four years later, in 1764, that an Act of Parliament was passed ordering that they should be removed from their dangerous positions and placed flat against the walls of the houses.

The shops, small and huddled together, were all well known to the town. That standing between the Temple gates formerly had for its master that "great spluttering fellow subject to fits of rage," Bernard Lintot, bookseller and publisher, whose boast it had been that he could "by the aid of a beef dinner and plain pudding, make the hungry critics see more beauty in any book he published than ever its author dreamt of." He had given Alexander Pope over five thousand pounds for his translation of Homer, copies of which Joshua might have seen conspicuously placed between the small-paned window and the faded green curtain at their back, in the shop then carried on by

his nephew Henry Lintot. Close by the Middle Temple gate was the shop of Benjamin Motte, who grudgingly and with many murmurs had given a mere two hundred pounds for Gulliver's Travels to Dean Swift who at this time, four years before his death, was suffering from that mental darkness which was his prelude to the grave.

From Fleet Street could be seen The Judge's Head, where another bookseller and publisher, old Jacob Tonson, used to try to pass clipped coins and bad money on his impoverished authors; one result of which was that he died worth forty thousand pounds, an immense fortune in those days; another result being that he was immortalized by the poet Dryden as a man "with two left legs and Judas coloured hair; and frowsy pores that taint the ambient air"; so that in all ways he was the opposite to his successor the younger Jacob, whose "manners were soft and his conversation delicate," whence he was known as the amiable Mr. Tonson. In Fleet Street Joshua must have seen the premises of William Sandby, famous as a publisher of Tory pamphlets, who later (in 1762) was to sell his business for four hundred pounds to a lieutenant in the Royal Navy named John McMurray, who dropping the Mc lived here until 1812, when he moved to Albemarle Street. "Under the dial of St. Dunstan" stood the shop of John Smethwicke, remarkable for his enterprise in

having published Hamlet, and Romeo and Juliet; while a number of his second-hand bookstalls kept by men well versed in the subject of their volumes, clustered round the east and west walls of old St. Dunstan's Church, which projected thirty feet forward to the great impediment of all traffic, and to the provocation of undisciplined language from sedan bearers.

More numerous than the booksellers were the taverns and coffee-houses. The Cock Tavern and Dick's Coffee House were mostly frequented by boisterous young law students brimming with life and determined to enjoy it; the more noisy Devil's Tavern was patronized by young bloods when they deigned to walk or have themselves carried so far east; Peel's Coffee House where Joshua was to spend many an hour in the future, entertained more sober customers; the Mitre Tavern, famous in the days of Shakespeare, was the favourite haunt of Samuel Johnson, who also might often be seen entering a shop whose doors were guarded by a life-sized figure of a Scotchman in kilts, eternally engaged in the act of taking snuff, which was kept by a singular character, John Hardman, who began life as a body servant, rose to be a player at Drury Lane, wrote a comedy that was produced and that escaped damnation, and started business as a tobacconist; the excellency of his snuff and the oddity of his discourse drawing many great

men to his shop, where perched on counter or tobacco chest, they smoked and snuffed, chatted and criticized plays and players, greatly to the satisfaction of those who heard them, most of all to themselves.

As he walked down Fleet Street it is probable Joshua had pointed out to him the burly, bent figure of Dr. Johnson in his rusty suit of brown, the right-hand pocket of his coat stuffed with papers and swinging violently as he walked in zigzag fashion, his black worsted stockings wrinkled, his breeches untied at the knees, his unpowdered wig and cocked hat looking too small for his massive head; in one hand a stout stick, the other outstretched to the posts at the side way which from some unexplained superstition he touched as he passed. With him this country lad may have seen David Garrick, once the pupil and now the constant companion of the great man; he himself with no prospect of greatness at this time, when at the age of twenty-three he had started as a wine merchant, had met with small success, and as yet had not dared to take the dreadful, much desired social plunge and become a player, lest it might bring eternal disgrace upon a genteel family whose father had been in the army, and who regarded the stage as the ante-room to hell.

It is certain that Joshua saw Alexander Pope then in his fifty-second year, a little gentleman but four feet six in height, hunch-backed, with a fine eye, large

nose, and cheeks across which the muscles of his mouth stood out like small cords; who was considered a great poet, and as such held in such esteem that strangers thrust out their hands as he passed to touch him, or to have the satisfaction of shaking his bony hand. No such honour was at this time paid to a greater mortal, Samuel Richardson, who passed through Fleet Street and the Strand daily on his way to his printer's shop in Salisbury Court; a man five inches above five feet, fifty years old, slovenly in his dress, slow in his walk, in his hand a cane to support himself in those "sudden tremors" to which he was subject, his face showing nervous strain, his grey eyes "too often overclouded by mistiness from the head" to observe the bustle around him; he at this time being absorbed in the composition of his novel Pamela, which he was to publish at the end of the year, and that was to bring him instant and surprising success. Joshua's days of sight-seeing were few, for on the 18th of the month, the feast of St. Luke, patron of artists, he began his apprenticeship to Thomas Hudson who had returned to town, and in whose house he took up his residence after the manner of apprentices in those days. In a letter written twelve days later to Mr. Cutcliffe by that gentleman's "most affectionate and obliged humble servant" the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, he says that his son Joshua "has behaved himself mighty well in this affair, and

done his duty on his part, which gives me much more concern in his behalf than I should otherwise have had." The kindly, gentle schoolmaster was so proud of the good fortune that had befallen his son that in speaking of the great man of his little town he says to the same correspondent: "Nor can I see that if Mr. Treby had many children, an apprenticeship under such a master would have been below some one of his sons. As if a piece of good fortune had already actually befallen my family, it seems to me I see the good effects of it already in some persons behaviour. This is my letter of thanks to you for what you have done, and my request of the continuance of your oversight and endeavours till the matter is completely ended."

Some comfort and consolation were at this time sadly needed in his home, for his handsome and promising eldest son Humphrey, aged twenty-eight, a lieutenant in the navy, was drowned on his return homewards from India; while a few days after this news had reached him his youngest son Martin, then ten years old, died. "My son Humphrey's death," writes the bereaved father, "stuck by me very much, till it was drowned, if I may say so, in a still greater sorrow, and that was the death of my youngest son Martin, whom I cannot yet write about without hurting myself. I cannot write this little without great agitation of mind. . . . My study in physic

is very much damped by the death of my last son. And yet his mother has cured a hundred as bad as he. But there is a strange infatuation in his management. A series of blunders, and all occasioned by acting with precipitation."

With the loss of these members of their circle, the hopes of the family concentrated themselves the more on Joshua, who was not to disappoint them. On seeing a drawing he had made of the Laocoon, Dr. Huxham declared that "he who drew it would be the first hand in England." Warmell the painter and player already mentioned, having seen in the school house drawing-room some sketches that Joshua had sent home, said, "Not one of Mr. Treby's rooms had furniture equal to this, and that they all deserved frames and glasses." Hudson expressed himself pleased with his pupil; and as for Joshua, writes his father, "nobody by his letters to me was ever better pleased in his employment, in his master, in everything. 'While I am doing this I am the happiest creature alive,' is his expression."

James Northcote, who years later became a pupil of Joshua Reynolds, and who wrote his life, in speaking of this time says that Hudson's instructions were not first-rate, nor his advice judicious, for "probably out of pure ignorance," instead of recommending his pupil to study from the antique, he set him to copy Guercino's drawings, thus wasting his time. He

adds that the copies were made with such skill that many of them were preserved in the cabinets of the curious, as the originals of Guercino. The rapid progress made by him in two years roused the jealousy of a master who realized that the gods had given his pupil a gift denied to himself. His jealousy came to a climax when Joshua, having persuaded an old servant in the house to sit to him, painted her portrait, which when seen in Hudson's studio, "obtained so universal a preference," that Hudson resolved to get rid of one who might become a dangerous rival.

An opportunity to effect this seemed to present itself when Joshua, having been told to take a portrait to Van Haecken to have the drapery put in, had postponed doing so as he feared the heavy rain then falling might spoil it. When at breakfast next morning the master, with meeting brows, asked why his order had not been obeyed, Joshua explained his reason, adding that he had carried the picture to Van Haecken that morning before the latter had left his bed. His reply was met with the stern sentence, "You have not obeyed my orders and you shall not stay in my house." Astonished at this, the pupil asked that he might remain where he was until he had consulted his father, "who otherwise might think that he had committed some crime"; but Hudson insisted that he should leave at once, and

nothing remained for Joshua but to take himself and his belongings to his uncle's chambers in the Temple.

On hearing from his father the latter advised him to return home, which he did without delay, and after an absence of over two years was once more back in the old school house where he was welcomed lovingly, lauded for his cleverness, admired for his growth, his entrance into manhood, and questioned eagerly as to the great persons he had seen, and the wonderful sights of distant London. No bitterness seems to have existed either in his mind or in that of his father towards Hudson; for the schoolmaster in writing to his friend Cutcliffe on 19 August, 1743, in speaking of this incident in Joshua's life, says: "As to Joshua's affair, he will give you a full account of it when he waits upon you, as he designs to do, and will be glad to present you with your picture, who have been so good a benefactor to him. I have not meddled with Joshua's affair hitherto, any otherwise than by writing a letter to Joshua which never came to hand, and which I intended as an answer both to his letter and his master's. This resolution of mine I shall persevere in, not to meddle in it; if I had I should have taken wrong steps. I shall only say there is no controversy I was ever let into wherein I was so little offended with either party. In the meantime I bless God, and Mr. Hudson, and

you, for the extreme success that has attended Joshua hitherto."

After a short stay in his home Joshua, now in his twenty-first year, took lodgings at Plymouth Dock, where he started for himself as a portrait painter, and soon had many commissions, among them one from "the greatest man in the place, the commissioner of the dockyard," as he proudly told his father. His stay here was brief, for he soon returned to London where he painted some notable personages. Though now avowedly a rival of his late master, no ill-feeling existed between them; on the contrary, Hudson visited him frequently, and freely told him where his pictures were faulty; and in return asked to have his own work criticized by Joshua, which the latter took as a great honour.

He remained in London until December, 1746, when he was hastily summoned to his old home by news of his father's dangerous illness. Joshua was in time to receive the blessing and farewell of this kindly, gentle, and simple man who died on Christmas day of that year. As it was necessary that the family should leave the school house, the widow went to live with her eldest married daughter Mrs. Palmer, at Torrington, while Joshua and two of his unmarried sisters took a house at Plymouth Dock, now known as Devonport. Years later in speaking of the time that followed, he told his friend Edmund Malone,

who edited an edition of Shakespeare and was instrumental in detecting the Chatterton forgeries, that "he passed about three years in company from whom little improvement could be got; and when he recollected this period of his life, he always spoke of it as so much time thrown away, so far at least as related to a knowledge of the world and of mankind, of which he ever afterwards lamented the loss." He added that he "always considered the disagreement which induced him to leave Mr. Hudson as a very fortunate circumstance, since by this means he was led to deviate from the tameness and insipidity of his master, and to form a manner of his own."

While at Plymouth Dock, painting both portraits and landscapes, he was fortunate enough to see some pictures which were a revelation to one who at this time, when no public galleries existed and no private collection was open to him, had had no opportunity of seeing the great masters. The pictures which astonished and delighted him, and from which he is said to have taken suggestions that afterwards distinguished his work, had been painted by William Gandy the younger. William Gandy the elder, a native of Devonshire, had been a pupil of Vandyck, whose manner he had been so apt to imitate that many of his canvases are said to have passed for those of his great master. Appreciated by no one more than the Duke of Ormond, he was employed by that

patron to paint many of the pictures which hang in the gallery of Kilkenny Castle, and spent the greater part of his life in Ireland. His son inherited his imitative talents, which he applied in reproducing pictures in the manner of Rembrandt so faithfully that they were frequently mistaken for the productions of that master. The sight of such pictures was a stimulus to Joshua's endeavours, but an occurrence now happened that led to his forming his style on a broader basis, and from wider experiences.

While at Plymouth Dock he was constantly in the company of his friend Dick Edgcumbe, whose father's place was not far removed. While at Mount Edgcumbe, Joshua met a breezy, dare-devil young naval officer, Augustus Keppel, son of the second Earl of Albemarle, and grandson of Arnold Von Keppel whose "sweet and obliging temper" and handsome presence won him the place of page and favourite of William of Orange, who gave him forfeited lands, great wealth, and showered honours on him that culminated in his being made Master of the Robes, Knight of the Garter, and Earl of Albemarle. At the time when Joshua met Augustus Keppel the latter was in his twenty-fifth year, and had already given proof of his courage. Having entered the navy at the age of ten, he had sailed round the world and seen some service, for at the sacking and burning of

Payta, in November, 1741, the peak of his cap "was shaved off close to his temple" by a musket bullet. The following year he was promoted to be an acting lieutenant. In June, 1747, while chasing an enemy's ship, his own ran aground off Belle Isle, when he and his men were made prisoners. On his return to England he was tried by court-martial, and was not only honourably acquitted but appointed to another ship which was employed in active cruising. Promotion was given him in 1749, when he was made Commodore to the Mediterranean, and entrusted with a special mission to the Dey of Algiers, whose corsairs were at this time the terror of the ships of all nations.

Setting sail in April of that year from Spithead, his ship, the Centurion, met with rough weather, so that he was obliged to put into Plymouth for repairs. While waiting until these were finished, he visited Mount Edgcumbe where as fate would have it he met Joshua Reynolds, whose bright manner and winning personality attracted him, and whose life-long friend he became from that period. The first act of friendship which the young artist received from the Commodore was an offer to take him in his ship, when he would not only have an opportunity of seeing Algiers, but the ports at which the Centurion touched in her cruise. Such a proposal delighted Joshua, not only because of the chance it gave him to

see strange countries, but still more because of the prospect it offered of his being able to make his way from some Italian port into which they might put, to Rome, where he could see the pictures he had read of and ardently longed to study. Consideration was required before this desire could be gratified, for to travel to Rome and stay some time there required money and he had none to spare; but on consulting his married sisters, Mrs. Palmer and Mrs. Johnson, they agreed to advance him a sum sufficient for the purpose in return for his bond for the same.

This being settled he left Plymouth in the Centurion May 11th, 1749, as the guest and friend of Commodore Keppel. During the pleasant voyage that followed Joshua met from him, as he writes in a letter of thanks to Lord Edgcumbe, with all the polite behaviour he could possibly expect; for "I had the use of his cabin and his study of books as if they had been my own." On May 25th they reached Lisbon when, the celebration of the rites of the Catholic Church not then being permitted in England, Joshua saw them for the first time at the festival of Corpus Christi. Here on a day of dazzling sunshine and turquoise skies, there passed through streets hung with velvets, ancient tapestry, and rich brocades, and decorated with innumerable banners, flags, and flowers, a glittering procession in which the Host was borne under a canopy of cloth of gold by the Archbishop,

followed by the King and his Court bareheaded and bearing lights, by bishops in resplendent copes, by barefooted and tonsured friars, by brown-cowled and white-habited monks, by scores of singing and censer-swinging acolytes, by the city companies and guilds in their robes, and by the surging, praying, gesticulating population in the varied colours of their national costumes; in all a matchless mingling of hues, an array of magnificence which an artist was not likely to forget.

From Lisbon he was taken to Cadiz, and thence to Gibraltar, eventually reaching the Bay of Algiers on the 29th June, when he saw rising from the shore, irregularly and tier upon tier, the dazzlingly white flat-roofed Moorish houses set against the vivid green of surrounding and surmounting hills. On the following day Commodore Keppel landed, taking Joshua with him in his suite, and was conducted—through narrow, winding, ever-ascending streets, crowded by olive-skinned, dark-eyed Arabs, whose dignity forbade curiosity and whose calmness was undisturbed save to show courtesy—to the Kasba or Citadel, which also served as the palace of the Deys. Here passing through massive gates and doors lined with iron, above which was carved an open hand palm outward; by ramparts defended by two hundred pieces of artillery; through courts where fountains trickled; and along corridors open at either

side to the sun by horse-shoe arches upheld by slender columns of alabaster, they were ushered at last into the august presence of the Dey, bearded, turbaned, and seated cross-legged on a dais in the midst of a barbaric throng.

Salutations were exchanged through interpreters, and the subject broached of the Commodore's mission which among other things requested the return of certain moneys taken by Algerian corsairs from the English packet-boat Prince Frederick in the previous May. It was then that the Dey fixing glowing eyes on this youthful, self-assured, free-and-easy seaman, expressed surprise that the King of Great Britain should depute his business to a beardless boy. The answer was ready. Had His Britannic Majesty, said Keppel gravely, estimated wisdom by the length of the beard, he would have sent a he-goat as his Ambassador. Enraged by his boldness the Dey assured him he could have him instantly bow-strung. At that the Commodore looked smilingly through the open arches of the window to the English squadron at anchor in the bay below and quietly remarked, that if it was the pleasure of His Highness that he should be put to death, there were enough Englishmen on his ships to make him a glorious funeral pyre. This cool reply probably saved his life, for after some further speech the Commodore was allowed to leave the Kasba in safety, though it was not until two years later

that the Dey was forced to act in the manner required of him.

From here the Centurion sailed for the island of Minorca, where being introduced by Keppel to General Blakeney, the Governor, residing at Port Mahon, Joshua was invited to stay with him as his guest, a hospitality that was gratefully accepted. While here he painted the portraits of almost all the officers in the garrison, so that his funds were better supplied for his stay in Italy. At the end of his visit to Minorca, prolonged by his falling from his horse and cutting his face, he sailed for Leghorn, and thence made his way to Rome. Few greater joys could come to a man with youth and health in his veins and hope and ambition in his heart than to visit the city of the Cæsars and the Popes, medieval, incomparable, sitting in splendour on her seven hills, at a time when the despoiler had not laid hands on her ancient streets or encircled her Forum with tram lines, and when the greed of the speculator had not razed her stately palaces and levelled her historic villas to replace them with abominations of red brick and plate glass.

Rome was at this time ruled by Prospero Lambertini, Benedict IV, a wise and learned Pope, who had founded chairs of physic, chemistry, and mathematics in the colleges, constructed public fountains, had the obelisk in the Campus Martius unearthed, rebuilt churches, and caused the best books in the French and English

language to be translated into Italian. Always gracious to the English, the latter flocked in large numbers to his city, mainly to see the art treasures it contained, it being then the fashion to boast of acquaintance with them, and in many cases that a claim might be made for elegant taste, to have them copied by English artists then in Rome, such as Nathaniel Hone—later to figure in these pages—Richard Wilson, Richard Dalton, and John Astley. Real appreciation or knowledge of art the English visitors could scarcely be expected to have, and their attitude towards it then was the same as that which largely distinguishes their descendants to-day, for as Joshua afterwards told his friend Edmund Malone, "It has frequently happened, as I was informed by the keeper of the Vatican, that many of those whom he had conducted through the various apartments of that edifice, when about to be dismissed, have asked for the works of Raphael, and would not believe that they had already passed through the rooms where they are preserved, so little impression had those performances made on them." And again "Instead of examining the beauties of the works of fame, and why they are esteemed, they only inquire the subject of the picture and the name of the painter, the history of a statue and where it was found, and write that down. Some Englishmen, while I was in the Vatican, came there and spent six hours in writing down whatever the antiquary dictated

to them. They scarcely ever looked at the paintings the whole time."

Far greater than in works of art was the interest and curiosity naturally shown by English visitors in two personages then living in Rome. The first of these was James Francis Edward Stuart, only son of James II, who at his birth some sixty years previously his stepsisters, Mary and Anne — the modern Goneril and Regan—had striven for purposes of their own to brand as a spurious child passed on the nation as his heir by their father; but whose saturnine look of fatality and strong resemblance to the Stuart race, gave these dead women the lie direct. Known to the adherents of his house as James III, he kept royal state and a miniature court at the Muti Palace in the Piazza Santissimi Apostoli, on the funds supplied him by the sovereigns of Rome, Spain, and France. Without any desire to force his claim to the English throne, he had been without hope that such could have been effected by the rising five years before in Scotland by his eldest son Charles, who at this time was living in obscurity in France. The second personage of interest was his younger son Henry Benedict Maria Clement, whose grave face strongly resembled his great-grandfather, Charles I. Though known in youth as "the little philosopher," he had at the age of twenty hastened from Italy to Dunkirk to join the

troops gathered in that town, and with them to strike a blow for his father's rights. On the suppression of the rebellion of 1745, he returned to Rome, was ordained a priest, was soon after made a bishop, and at the age of thirty-five was created a cardinal. A lover and collector of art, he was extremely gracious in manner, cheerful, temperate in all things, and humane. According to one of his contemporaries, Henry Cardinal York had "sought consolation for the misfortunes of his family in the scrupulous observance of the duties of his religion, apparently secure in his retirement from the storms and vicissitudes, but too often dependent on political life"—words that were written too soon, for having lost two rich livings by the French Revolution, and later having sold his family jewels—among which was the largest and most perfect ruby in Europe, valued at fifty thousand pounds—that he might aid in making up the sum demanded by Napoleon from the Pope, this descendant of the King of England and the King of Poland was reduced to poverty, which was relieved by the income of four thousand a year offered him by his royal kinsman George III. It may here be added that at his death, in 1807, Cardinal York bequeathed to the English sovereign the Crown jewels, which his grandfather had taken with him in his flight from England, and that had come into the possession of His Eminence as the last of the line of

James II. To commemorate James Stuart and his two sons, George III commissioned Canova to erect a monument in St. Peter's to their memory.

Of the impression made by Rome on Joshua Reynolds no words of his have come down to us ; but one can imagine the wonder and delight with which he looked for the first time on the dome of St. Peter's, massive and majestic against the blue ; on the marvellous beauty of the Pantheon; on the arch of Titus, the baths of Caracalla, the fountain of Treve with its mighty rush of waters ; the aqueduct of Claudius in the yellow wastes of the Campagna, the Temple of Minerva, and the thousand glorious remains of a Pagan past ; which with daily sights such as the splendid church ceremonies, the carnivals with their kaleidoscopic changes of colour, the markets and outdoor life of the people, combined to make Rome at that time the most fascinating city in the world.

Concerning the manner in which he employed his time a few particulars have been left us in his note-books—two of which are in the British Museum, two in the Soane Museum, and one in the possession of his descendants—from which quotations are made in Leslie's Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds. From these we learn that he made copies of pictures in the Corsini Palace; in the Borghese Palace; in the palace of the Cardinal Secretary, where he copied Vandyck's portrait

of Pontius, "the best portrait I ever saw"; in the church of the Cappuccini, where he copied Guido Reni's St. Michael, now in the chapel at Hampton Court Palace; in the Palazzo Altieri; and in the Sistine Chapel, where he spent a whole day walking up and down overcome by the majesty of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. "Passing through the rooms of Raphael on my return," he says, "they appeared of an inferior order." Regarding the works of this painter, he confessed that he was sorely disappointed on first seeing them, and was only relieved when another student admitted that his impressions had been the same. On further inquiry he found that it was only those "who from natural imbecility appeared to be incapable of ever relishing these divine performances, made pretensions to instantaneous raptures on first beholding them."

The young artist was not sufficiently conceited to think that Raphael's fame was due to want of discrimination in others and superior judgment in himself; on the contrary he explains, "my not relishing him as I was conscious I ought to have done was one of the most humiliating things that had ever happened to me. I found myself in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted. I felt my ignorance and stood abashed. All the undigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England, where the art was at the

lowest ebb—it could not indeed be lower—were to be totally done away with and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as it is expressed on a very solemn occasion, that I should become as a little child. Notwithstanding my disappointment I proceeded to copy some of those excellent works. I viewed them again and again ; I even affected to feel their merits and to admire them more than I really did. In a short time a new taste and new perceptions began to dawn upon me, and I was convinced that I had originally formed a false opinion of the perfection of art, and that this great painter was well entitled to the high rank which he holds in the estimation of the world." It was while copying the works of Raphael in the Vatican galleries he caught a cold that resulted in deafness from which he was never able to rid himself.

For two years he worked in Rome copying, though not often as commissions, the works of the immortals from whom he was to learn much. At the end of that time, May 3rd, 1752, he left the capital, not without those heart-pangs which all who have fallen under the magic of her influence must feel in sundering themselves from this marvellous city. One can imagine him standing in his carriage as it carried him across the brown spaces of the Campagna, looking backwards at the church towers, red roofs, and cupolas, and finally waving his farewell to the vast dome soaring into heaven like a symbol of

Christian faith, and merging into the violet mists of night.

Journeying through Umbria to Tuscany he stopped at Narni, a lonely little city worn with age, dignified, and in possession of a glorious ruin whose beauty, as he says, filled him with delight—the Bridge of Augustus. Thence he drove to Spoleto standing high on her hill, for ever greeted by the sun as he rose, vineyards at her feet, ilex woods behind and above her, and in her grey cathedral the ashes of him whose frescoes glorify it, the ashes of Filippo Lippi whose pictures had delighted the English artist. And presently he journeyed to Perugia, standing proudly, defiantly on her heights, from which he overlooked the beautiful wide valley of Spoleto, sleeping all day in the sunshine as if wearied by the centuries of discord, seething strife, and vicissitudes that had wrecked and stained with blood her cities; scenes of violence that were now as dreams. These same cities he could see nestling like white birds in the blue hills around, brought into light or hidden in shadow by the movement of the colossal panorama of the clouds.

From Perugia he drove through plains of cornfields, olive trees, and vineyards, from which long before he reached it, he caught sight far above him on a swelling hill, grey and yellow against green, of the little town of Assisi, with its beautiful ancient gates, its ruined walls, its grim fortress, and above all its church built

above the rock in which the body of St. Francis had been hidden and that at this time all search had failed to discover. Here he saw the frescoes of Giotto and his pupils glowing with enchanting colour, and the visions caught by Cimabue and Simone Martini, of Our Lady and the saints.

Then hurrying through Arezzo he entered Florence on the 10th of May, a month when the city of flowers wears her most enchanting aspect. Here he stayed two months, seeing and studying pictures and statues in the galleries and churches. Had his funds permitted he would have remained longer, but his two years abroad had exhausted them. In writing to a friend regarding his desire to stay another month in Florence, he says that whenever his father spoke of education he urged that one should never be in too great a hurry to show oneself to the world until as strong a foundation of knowledge and learning as possible could be acquired. "This may very well be applied to my present affairs," he continues, "as by being in too great a hurry I shall perhaps ruin all, and arrive in London without reputation, and without anybody's having heard of me; when by staying a month longer my fame will arrive before me, and as I said before, nobody will dare to find fault with me since my conduct will have had the approbation of the greatest living painters. Then again on the other hand, there are such pressing reasons for my returning

home that I stand as between two people pulling me different ways—so I stand still and do nothing. For the moment I take a resolution to set out, and in a manner take leave of my friends, they call me a madman for missing those advantages I have mentioned."

Leaving Florence on the 4th of July (1752) he passed through Bologna, Mantua, and Ferrara, and reached Venice twenty days later. Here he remained about three weeks during which time he devoted himself in particular to the three masters of the Venetian school of painting—Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, and Titian—by whose works he is said to have been more powerfully impressed than by those of the great masters he had studied in Rome. His brief stay in a city of so much interest to him is accounted for not only by the state of his finances, but also by an attack of home-sickness. As an instance of his affection for his country, an incident which may also be taken as an indication of an emotional nature, is mentioned by Northcote, who says that being at the opera one evening with some compatriots, the manager out of compliment to them ordered the orchestra to play an English ballad, when the artist was so touched that tears came into his eyes.

Hurrying through Padua, Bergamo, and Milan, taking the road over Mont Cenis, and passing through Paris, he was back in his native land on the 16th October; when being fatigued from work and

travel he hurried to Plymouth and rested there for some weeks. Then in his thirtieth year, with experiences unusual to one in his profession, considerable success, and unlimited hope, he went to London to become a central figure in its social life, and a dominant force in the history of English art in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER II

Joshua Reynolds takes apartments in St. Martin's Lane—The condition of English art in 1752—William Dobson, the father of English portrait painters discovered by a foreigner—Anthony Vandyck, Peter Lely, and Godfrey Kneller—The early days of Thomas Gainsborough—Two predictions made by his father—Young Gainsborough serves his apprenticeship in London at the same time as Joshua Reynolds—Gainsborough returns to Devonshire, depressed and disappointed—His early marriage and his life at Ipswich—He settles in Bath—William Hogarth begins life as an engraver's apprentice—Paints small conversation pieces—His portraits of David Garrick and Lord Lovat—Falls in love with the daughter of Sir James Thornhill—Elopement and marriage—Takes a house in Leicester Fields and carves a sign—The different styles of Hogarth and Reynolds—The first portrait exhibited by the latter—Opinions of his contemporaries—The portrait of Commodore Keppel—Some of those who sat to him—The story of Kitty Fisher—Nelly O'Brien—The tragic end of Lord Montford—James Lowther, first Earl of Lonsdale—Increasing popularity of Reynolds—His prices for portraits—Rivalled by a charlatan—Reynolds takes a house in Leicester Fields — Memories connected with the place—His housewarming.

ON settling in London to begin his career as a portrait painter in his thirty-first year, Joshua Reynolds took apartments in St. Martin's Lane in a house, the staircases and walls of which had been handsomely painted by a former occupant, Sir James Thornhill, who is notable as being the first English

artist who had been knighted. In the days of Charles I, St. Martin's Lane had been a hedge-bordered country road leading to the village of St. Giles, past the convent garden formerly belonging to the Benedictine monks of Westminster Abbey; but a century previous to Joshua Reynolds's settlement there it had been built over, and so late as 1721, its present church of St. Martin had been erected on the site of a much older edifice, and above the same vaults that among others, contained the remains of that romantic vixen Nell Gwynne.

On starting in life Reynolds had no rivals of importance. English art had long been at its lowest. The only great artist of English birth up to this period, William Dobson, had been dead over a hundred years. As he had happened to be an Englishman he had been slighted until discovered by a foreigner; for on seeing a picture of his exposed for sale in the window of a shop on Snow Hill, Anthony Vandyck had taken the trouble to make inquiries about its painter, and to seek him in his garret where he found him struggling with starvation. Too noble for jealousy and always generous, he introduced one of his greatest subjects to Charles I, who always appreciative of art immediately took him into favour, sat to him, styled him the English Tintoret, and on the death of Vandyck in 1641, named him as his Sergeant Painter. Seen in the light

of royal patronage, his merits were found to be so great that he was inundated with commissions, to lessen which he introduced the custom of requiring half the price of a portrait to be paid before it was begun. Even under this unheard-of condition he was employed to paint many of the nobility of the day, whose excellent portraits by him hang in the great houses of England, where they are generally ascribed to Vandyck and Lely. A fine painting of himself may be seen at Hampton Court Palace. The deadly blow which Puritanism dealt to art and culture in this country had the effect of reducing William Dobson to poverty, from the results of which he never recovered. For some time he lived in a debtors' prison, and then dying in his thirty-sixth year, was buried in the church of St. Martin's in the Fields.

Sir Peter Lely, a native of Westphalia, had flourished under Charles II, who treated him as his familiar friend, and employed him to paint his seraglio; and Sir Godfrey Kneller, a native of Lubeck in North Germany, prospered not only under Charles II, and James II, but under William of Orange who knighted him, and under George I, who made him a baronet. Dying in 1723, he had not only amassed much wealth, but had gained a great reputation which even in Reynolds's day had suffered no diminution, for it may be mentioned as the best criterion of the general

ignorance of art at this period, that Kneller's work was considered equal if not superior to that of Vandyck.

Joshua Reynolds had however as contemporaries two great English painters, to one of whom he is considered by some to be inferior, Thomas Gainsborough, and William Hogarth. Born in 1727, Gainsborough was four years the junior of Reynolds, and one of nine children of his father, a clothier who is described as "a kind-hearted man who wore his hair carefully parted." Sudbury, in Suffolk, the spot where Thomas Gainsborough first saw light, like Plympton St. Maurice, was a quaint and ancient town, the projecting stories and high gables of its houses being considered to encumber and disfigure the streets, by all save this boy who was singular enough to think them picturesque. Not only they but the rich woods massed as a background to the town gave him delight, and among the latter he spent many an hour sketching all he saw. To free himself from the intolerable routine of the Grammar School kept by his maternal uncle, the Rev. Humphry Burroughs, and to escape on an unclouded summer morning into the joyous company of these trees, he imitated his father's writing in a note requesting the master to give him a holiday. So clever was the forgery that it was undetected by the dominie, and only accidentally discovered. This

brought his father to the sad conclusion that "Tom would one day be hanged"; but when towards evening the boy returned with a copybook full of sketches of bird and beast, hillside and sky-line, this prediction was reversed in favour of another that said, "Tom will be a genius."

A further proof of his talent was given soon after. While one morning he was perched in a tree of the long rambling orchard and kitchen garden behind his father's house, sketching as usual, the slight rustle of leaves close by caught his ear, and looking he saw a man leaning across the wall and helping himself to pears from a neighbouring tree. With the instinct of an artist the lad immediately made a sketch of the thief, who on catching sight of him fled. At breakfast Tom told the story and handed his likeness of the fellow round the table, when one of the family recognized it as that of a native of Sudbury. On being accused of his sin the man stoutly denied it until shown his portrait, when he made a sacrifice to art by admitting the truth.

As this incident was considered to point with directness to the bent of his talents, Tom Gainsborough at the age of fifteen was sent to London and placed under Gravelot the engraver. At this time, 1742, Joshua Reynolds was working in Hudson's studio, and it is possible these boys who were to become England's greatest portrait painters may have met,

though no mention is made of such an encounter in their biographies. While under Gravelot, Gainsborough attended the Drawing Academy which had been established in a studio in St. Martin's Lane on the site now occupied by the Meeting House of the Society of Friends. As it was his desire to become a painter rather than an engraver, he soon left Gravelot's studio for that of Francis Hayman, who had begun his career as a scene painter to Drury Lane Theatre, but who at this time had become a portrait painter. From Hayman, a lover of pleasure, the constant visitor of taverns, a frequenter of the masquerades at Vauxhall, the companion of many players, the patron of boxing matches and cock-fights, Gainsborough learned little of value to himself, and after serving under such a master for three years, took rooms in Hatton Garden and set up on his own account as a landscape and portrait painter.

His talent being insufficient to supply the want of training and experience, his work was stiff, poor in quality, and unprofitable; so that after a struggle of twelve months he returned disappointed and depressed to his father's house. Then in the scenes familiar to the boyhood from which he had as yet scarcely emerged, he set himself to study nature, and painted landscapes which met with some sale. Occasionally commissions were given him for portraits. One of those who sat to him was a young girl

remarkable for her beauty, who was supposed to be a natural daughter of the Duke of Bedford. A more solid dowry than her beauty was her income of two hundred a year, transmitted to her quarterly through a London bank. Before her portrait was finished she had fallen in love with the artist, whose proposal she accepted; he being at the time nineteen, while she was twelve months younger. The earlier part of their married life was spent in the little town of Ipswich, where they rented a house at six pounds a year. Here Gainsborough was occupied chiefly in painting the houses of local magnates, and now and then the portraits of their wives and daughters; in learning the violin; and occasionally in carousing in the village club, where it was the amusement of its members to snatch his wig from his head and fling it from one to another round the room, greatly to his vexation.

At Ipswich he made the acquaintance of an eccentric personage named Philip Thicknesse, who describes himself on the title page of his Memoirs as "Late Lieutenant Governor of Landguard Fort, and Unfortunately Father to George Touchet, Baron Audley." By him Gainsborough was persuaded to leave Ipswich, where he had lived about twelve years, and to seek his fortune at Bath, to which in those days when continental travelling was a serious and expensive undertaking, the rank and fashion of England resorted to

drink the waters, gamble, dance, duel, flirt, and divert itself in various ways. On telling his wife that he had found suitable apartments in the Circus at a rent of fifty pounds a year, that good woman overcame an inclination to swoon that she might inquire if he meant to throw himself into a gaol; and she only consented to sanction this outrageous expense on being told by Philip Thicknesse, that if her husband did not take these rooms at fifty, he would hire a house for him at a hundred and fifty, and pay the rent if Gainsborough could not. As the artist did not settle in Bath until 1760, and as he took some time to establish his reputation as a distinguished portrait painter, it will be seen that he did not rival Joshua Reynolds in the earlier years of his career.

An artist differing from either, who was laying the foundation of his fame at the time Reynolds returned from the Continent, was William Hogarth. Unlike both, he was born in London, but like one of them, he was the son of a schoolmaster. The school having failed, the elder Hogarth, at the date of his son's birth, 10 November, 1697, was earning a scanty living as a corrector for the press and as a bookseller's hack. His means did not allow him, as the artist says in his Memoirs, to do more than put him in the way of shifting for himself. From his youngest years the child showed that he possessed uncommonly sharp wits, for he had a quick eye, could mimic cleverly, and

had a passion for sketching which he exercised at every possible opportunity.

As his school exercises "were more remarkable for the ornaments that adorned them than for the exercise itself," his father considered it wisest to apprentice him to a silver-plate engraver, one Ellis Gamble, at the sign of the Golden Angel, in Cranbourn Street, Leicester Fields. Here for many years he was employed in engraving silver dishes, tankards, snuff-boxes, the hilts of swords, and various pieces of plate with armorial bearings and florid designs; while between-times he carried his master's sickly child, with its head hanging over his shoulder, for an airing round the fields. Long before his five years of apprenticeship were up he had come to the conclusion that the business of silver-plate engraving was in every respect too limited for his ambition and abilities, though when free at the age of twenty, his highest desire was to engrave on copper.

To attain this he saw that it was necessary he should learn to draw objects something like nature instead of the monsters of heraldry, but in qualifying for such work, business and pleasure went hand in hand. Starting for himself, he found employment in engraving arms, shop-bills, and book-plates, and illustrations for such works as Hudibras. While labouring in this way he was frequently so poor that, as he afterwards said, he went moping into the City

with scarce a shilling in his pocket; but no sooner had he received a few guineas for a plate than he returned home, put on his sword, and sallied out again with all the airs of a man who had ten thousand pounds in his pocket. Presently he began to engrave those "pictorial sermons," or bitter satires on the plentiful follies of the town, in which his genius found its true bent and by which his name was to become immortal. But as so often happens with the works of genius, they brought him little profit, for no sooner had they become popular than piratical copies of them, for which the law at that time allowed no redress, were sold everywhere for half the price of his own, so that he was obliged to dispose of his plates for whatever the pirates pleased to give him, there being no other place of sale for them save at their shops. "Owing to this and other circumstances," he says, "by engraving until I was near thirty I could do little more than maintain myself, but even then I was a punctual paymaster."

At this time when public picture galleries were not in existence in London, and private collections were only seen by the favoured few, the paintings then being executed in St. Paul's Cathedral by Sir James Thornhill greatly attracted Hogarth. Thornhill, who had been brought under the notice of Queen Anne, had been employed by her to paint the ceilings and staircase of Greenwich Hospital, Hampton Court,

and Windsor Palaces. Such work brought him great repute, so that when on the completion of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, it was decided to paint its interior, Thornhill was commissioned to undertake the work; for which he designed and executed in monochrome, eight scenes from the life of St. Paul, yet in the cathedral. Later he was employed to decorate All Souls, Queen's, and New Colleges, Oxford; Blenheim Palace, Chatsworth, Eastwell, Wimpole, and other houses of the nobility; though in many cases his work in these residences has by a process known as restoration, been skilfully obliterated.

The sight of Thornhill's work at St. Paul's and at Greenwich Hospital inspired Hogarth with the idea of working in oils, and he soon began to paint what he describes as "small conversation pieces, from twelve to fifteen inches high," as well as larger portraits, and subject pictures, such as a scene from The Beggar's Opera, another from Dryden's play of The Indian Officer, the Committee of the House of Commons examining Bambridge, etc. And having made the acquaintance of Francis Hayman, Gainsborough's master, Hogarth assisted him in decorating the entertainment rooms at Vauxhall Gardens. His most ambitious efforts in the direction of fresco painting were those he executed for St. Bartholomew's Hospital; in speaking of which he says, that before

he had done anything of much consequence in painting or engraving modern moral subjects, he entertained some hope of succeeding "in what the puffers in books call the great style of history painting; so that without having had a stroke of this grand business before, I quitted small portraits and familiar conversations, and with a smile at my own temerity, commenced history painter; and on a great staircase at St. Bartholomew's Hospital painted two Scripture stories, The Pool at Bethesda and The Good Samaritan, with figures seven feet high. These I presented to the charity, and thought they might serve as a specimen to show, that were there an inclination in England for encouraging historical pictures, such a first essay might prove the painting them more easily attainable than is generally imagined. But as religion, the great promoter of this style in other countries, rejected it in England, I was unwilling to sink into a portrait manufacturer; and still ambitious of being singular, dropped all expectations of advantage from that source, and returned to the pursuit of my former dealings with the public at large."

Though he resumed his engravings, he also continued to paint portraits, in which with vigorous draughtsmanship and harmonious colouring he produced what he saw, with more force than imagination, devoid of sentiment, but true to life. On one occasion he painted a nobleman who was considered by

all but himself to resemble a monkey. The result was so true to life, and so unlike what he conceived himself to be, that the peer indignantly refused to take or to pay for the picture. But Hogarth, straightforward, rugged, and honest, insisted that he should be remunerated for his work. Accordingly when successive applications for payment remained unheeded, he wrote to say that if his lordship did not pay him within three days, his portrait, "with the addition of a tail, would be sold to Mr. Hare, the wild-beast man, Mr. Hogarth having given that gentleman a conditional promise on his lordship's refusal." On receipt of this, the portrait was paid for and put in the fire.

Other portraits were painted by Hogarth with more satisfaction to their sitters, among them that of David Garrick as Richard III. Sir Godfrey Kneller, the painter of kings, courtesans, and nobles, had received "as much as fifty pounds, together with fees," for a portrait; but Hogarth, as he assures us, was paid two hundred pounds for this picture, "which was more than any English artist ever received for a single portrait, and that too by the sanction of several painters who had been previously consulted about the price, which was not given without mature consideration."

This portrait, now in the possession of the Earl of Feversham, was painted in 1746; but was considered

inferior to another portrait painted the same year of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, a treacherous, cruel, and evil monster, who when past his seventieth year was brought to London, where he was tried and executed as a traitor, one of the least of his offences. It was while he was allowed to rest at St. Albans on his way to the capital, that Hogarth saw him. For that purpose he had journeyed from town, and coming on this bright midday of August 14th to the White Hart Inn, which he found in a state of commotion, made his way through the guarding soldiery and crowds of curious country folk, to the little room where his lordship was being at that moment shaved.

Notwithstanding his age, his bulk, and the action that occupied him, no sooner had the artist been presented by a friend, than the aged sinner who strove to shift his own treason on his eldest son whom he desired to see perish on the scaffold, rose, embraced, and kissed Hogarth on the cheek. Conversation followed while Hogarth made a sketch and impressed his mind with details of that cunning and diabolical face that enabled him to paint the wonderful likeness, that when etched, sold in such numbers, that for many days the press could not produce impressions with sufficient dispatch to satisfy the impatience of the people. The painting taken from the original sketch now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.

Before Hogarth had reached this stage of his success,

he had taken the most important step in his life, and one he never regretted. His admiration for Sir James Thornhill's work had brought him to the knowledge of that artist, to whose family he was introduced. From friendship, Hogarth's feelings quickly deepened to affection for one of its members, Sir James's only daughter Jane, a winsome and sweet-natured girl. Hogarth, a short, thick-set man, whose blunted features were just saved from being commonplace by their intelligent expression, had few personal attractions to boast of; but possibilities of power were felt in his presence, and his frank free-spoken manner, his air of good nature, his ridicule of pretence and bombast, and his sense of humour, made him a delightful companion. Dressed in a sky-blue coat, and wearing a flowing wig, he was present in Sir James's domestic circle as frequently as possible; questions regarding the elder man's work or his own engravings serving as excuses to obtain him a sight of the girl he loved and who loved him.

That the daughter of a knight, a man who had conversed with Sovereigns, a member of Parliament for Melcombe Regis, and Sergeant Painter to the King; that an heiress whom her parents expected would marry a City magnate or an impoverished baronet, would be allowed to wed a struggling artist was not probable. Therefore with their own happiness in view, they resolved to take steps to secure it. So

it happened that one morning of the 23rd of March, 1729, Jennie, without the knowledge of her father or mother, slipped to the village of Padding, which was then a mere cluster of three hundred houses, with its church standing in a rural churchyard. Here she found Hogarth impatiently awaiting her, fearful lest her plans for leaving home had miscarried at the last moment. Hurriedly leading her into the church, they were quickly made man and wife, she being then just twenty and he thirty-two. Soon after their marriage they took summer lodgings at South Lambeth, then in the country, which enabled Hogarth to keep out of the way of Sir James, who, incensed against the bride, refused to see her or to give her a dowry. Her mother, however, soon pardoned her runaway daughter, and presently sought to bring about a reconciliation between Jennie and her father. For this purpose she laid on the breakfast-table one morning some clever engravings which Hogarth had just produced. Recognizing them to be his son-in-law's work, he looked at them carefully and with approval, and then turning to his wife who was watching him anxiously, he said, "The man who did these needs no dowry with his wife."

Subsequently he forgave Hogarth, who through his means was enabled in 1733 to take a house in Leicester Fields, to distinguish which, as numbers were not then in vogue, he placed above the door a bust of

Vandyck, which he had carved out of several layers of cork pressed closely together and that he then gilt. Before Joshua Reynolds had settled in St. Martin's Lane to begin his career, William Hogarth had produced many of his paintings and engravings, whose amazing fidelity to nature, vigour, humour, and skill have made him famous for all time. Though his "Idle and Industrious Apprentice" is now in the possession of Mr. Meyers, of Niagara Falls, New York, his "Marriage à la Mode," the "Shrimp Girl," "Sigismunda," "Lavinia Fenton," and the portrait of himself with his dog, are in the National Gallery; his full-length portrait of himself, of Lord Lovat, and his Committee of the House of Commons are in the National Portrait Gallery; his "Rake's Progress" and the Election Series are in the Soane Museum; and his "March to Finchley," "Moses brought to Pharo's Daughter," and "Captain Coram" are in the Foundling Hospital.

By this time, 1753, he had forsaken portrait painting for his subject pictures; but even if he had not, excellent and admirable as Hogarth's portraits were, they differed so widely in technique, quality, and treatment from that of Reynolds, as to lie outside the bounds of rivalry; so that the latter in beginning his career may be said to have had no competitor. The first head he exhibited after settling in St. Martin's Lane was a portrait of Giuseppe Filippo Liberati

Marchi, a youth belonging to the Trastevere quarter of Rome, who had been taken by Reynolds into his service, when he was employed to paint draperies, set palettes, make copies, and to sit as a model. This picture generally known as "A Boy in a Turkish Habit," engravings of which may occasionally be seen, is the property of the Royal Academy. The likeness was considered amazing and the treatment novel by many of his friends and acquaintances who flocked to his studio; but two of these failed to admire it. The first was Hudson, the artist's former master, who failing to see in it the conventional and wooden treatment which characterized his own productions and that had marred the earlier work of his pupil, said gravely, "Ah, Reynolds, you don't paint so well as when you left England." The second critic whom he failed to please was Jack Ellis, a portrait painter of the inanimate school and a devout admirer of Sir Godfrey Kneller, whose judgment of art was so highly considered by Sir Robert Walpole, that he was employed by the latter to purchase pictures at home and abroad for his collection, and was rewarded for such services by being made Master Keeper of the Lions in the Tower. Big with the importance of his reputation as a connoisseur and handsomely dressed on the proceeds of his sinecure office, he entered Reynolds's studio with a lofty air, and after staring at the "Boy in a Turkish Habit," confidentially remarked, "This will never

answer ; why you don't paint in the least degree in the manner of Kneller." When the younger artist ventured to hint that Sir Godfrey's portraits had but one set of postures which was applied to all persons indiscriminately, and that made them like so many signpost paintings, he was met with a frown and with the words angrily spoken, "Shakespeare in poetry and Kneller in painting, damme," and then rushed out of the studio lest his ears might be defiled by further irreverence to his hero.

A portrait painted about the same time that brought Reynolds greater reputation, was that of his friend Commodore Keppel, who had served as the instrument of fate in enabling him to visit Italy. In gratitude he desired to paint his kindly patron, and gave all that was best in him to produce a picture representing the Commodore, after the wreck of his ship the Maidstone, stepping forward on a beach, high cliffs and a stormy sky behind him, with a rough sea in the distance. The figure was so full of motion and energy, the composition so bold and unconventional, and the colouring so harmonious, that it was declared the finest portrait an English artist had ever painted.

This proof of Reynolds's remembrance of favours was not needed to urge one already warmly interested in him to acts of further service ; but with the portrait as an example of what his friend could achieve,

the Commodore induced many of his friends to sit to Reynolds. Among them was Charles Fitzroy, second Duke of Grafton, whose father was one of the illegitimate children of Barbara Villiers, a mistress of Charles II, who for a long time refused to believe or to acknowledge the boy as his son, and who eventually did so only to escape the threats and abuse which this virago showered on him. This second Duke of Grafton, painted so admirably by Reynolds, and so impartially described by Dean Swift as "almost a slobberer, and without one good quality," had been for some time Viceroy of Ireland, when his reign in that country had been made memorable by its profligacy and merriment.

Another duke who sat to the artist at this time was his grace of Devonshire, whose son, subsequently the fourth duke, by his marriage with Charlotte, Baroness Lanesborough, only daughter and sole heiress of Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington and Cork, gained large estates and the Castle of Lismore in Ireland. Among other sitters was Charles, fifth Earl of Sunderland and second Duke of Marlborough, hated by his old grandmother Sarah for his extravagances, among them being his habit "never to dirty his fingers with silver," so that he paid for his sedan-chairs and coffee at taverns with gold, even while he borrowed vast sums at twenty per cent. But a more interesting person than any of these was the renowned Kitty Fisher, a

fashionable courtesan of German origin, who had "been introduced to the town" by Ensign Anthony George Martin, whose handsome appearance led him to be called the military Cupid by the women of fashion who pursued him. From the time when want of means compelled him to part from Kitty Fisher, her companionship was eagerly sought by many men of wealth and fashion; for her beauty was piquant, she was a daring horsewoman, her wit was sharp, and her extravagance so great that in one year she spent twelve thousand pounds. Those from whose society she had passed, wishing in many cases, when sufficient money remained to them, to preserve her memory, commissioned Reynolds to paint her, and she therefore sat to him several times, one of these commissions coming from Mr. Crew, who according to the artist's pass-book paid him fifty guineas for a portrait—the same which is now in the possession of the Earl of Crewe. A second is among the collection at Lansdowne House.

A woman so changeable in her choice of companions, and so persistent in her practice of spending their money, was considered an excellent target for the arrows of moral writers needing the price of a meal, who therefore flooded the town with highly coloured satires and sermons flavoured with scandal, dealing with her escapades. Of these she eventually deigned to take notice in a paragraph printed in the

From a mezzotint by R. Houston, after the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

KITTY FISHER AS CLEOPATRA.

p. 64.

"Political Advertiser" of March 30th, 1759, and not improbably written for her by one of the hack writers who had already defamed her. In this elegant composition she says: "To err is a blemish entailed upon mortality, and indiscretion seldom or never escapes without censure, the more heavily as the character is more remarkable; and doubly, nay trebly, by the world, if that character is marked by success; then malice shoots against it all her stings, and the snakes of envy are let loose. To the humane and generous heart then must the injured appeal, and certain relief will be found in impartial honour. Miss Fisher is forced to sue to that jurisdiction to protect her from the baseness of little scribblers and scurvy malevolence. She has been abused in public papers, exposed in print shops, and to wind up the whole, some wretches, mean, ignorant, and venal, would impose upon the public by daring to publish her memoirs. She hopes to prevent the success of their endeavours by declaring that nothing of the sort has the slightest foundation in truth.—C. FISHER."

Some seven years after the publication of this appeal, Kitty Fisher was married at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, December 4th, 1766, to John Norris of Hempsted Manor, Benenden, Kent, who for several years had represented Rye in Parliament, and who has been described by one of his friends as "unfortunately a great dupe, as some of the wisest

men of all ages have been, to the sex, and has such attachment to women of no character as is extraordinary." It is said she made an excellent wife, as she at once set about reforming her husband and retrieving his fortunes. Whether this verdict was premature in its judgment or not none can say, for Kitty died of small-pox on the 10th of March, 1767, after little over three months of married life. Her passion for conquest ruling her to the end, her final request was that she might be buried in her best ball-dress, as she was anxious to make a captivating reappearance at the sound of the last trump. Those who desired to show their wit at the expense of their charity made an epigram regarding her which said—

> She wedded to live honest—but when tried,
> The experiment she liked not—and so died.

Her husband's grief for her loss urged him to replace her as soon as possible, and accordingly, early in 1768, he had entangled himself with the wife of Henry Knight of Tithegstone, Glamorganshire, a susceptible lady who assured him she had fallen in love with him at first sight, a confession she had also made to her husband regarding himself but a few years previously. On her giving birth to a child John Norris assumed its paternity without any disguise, which led to the lady's husband waiting on him to request that he would either fight him or give such proof

of her infidelity as to afford grounds for a divorce. As he was always obliging, Norris replied he was ready to afford him "any proof he would desire of the lady's infidelity." No reasonable husband could require more than this, nor do less than divorce his wife, which he did on 20 February, 1771. She then married John Norris at St. George's, Hanover Square, on the twelfth of the following month.

Another person whose plenitude of beauty, lack of virtue, extravagance, and wide popularity made her the rival of Kitty Fisher, was Nelly O'Brien, the mistress of Lord Bolingbroke and a score of others, whom Joshua Reynolds was several times commissioned to paint; and one of whose portraits by him hangs in the Wallace Collection; a portrait which, by the way, is said to have been sold at her death in 1768 for three guineas at Christie's. A woman not less beautiful, but more virtuous, whom he painted at this time was Marie, illegitimate daughter of Sir Edward Walpole and Dorothy Clements a milliner's apprentice, whose exquisite loveliness won her the hand of James, second Earl of Waldegrave; the first peer of whose line owed that elevation to James II, whose natural daughter by Arabella Churchill, sister of the first Duke of Marlborough, he had married. Marie, Countess of Waldegrave, was left a widow in 1763, her husband dying of small-pox, when three years later she became the wife of Prince William Henry, Duke

of Gloucester, brother of George III, though the marriage was not made known to His Majesty until 1772, some months before the birth of their first child, afterwards known as Princess Sophia Matilda.

Amelia Mary, second daughter of Charles, Duke of Lennox, who married the twentieth Earl of Kildare, afterwards in November, 1766, created first Duke of Leinster, was another of his fair sitters. But the most beautiful of all those who were painted by him were the Gunnings, the daughters of an impoverished Irish squire, who while still in Dublin had begged their neighbour, Peg Woffington, to lend them her stage gowns that they might be presented in them at the Viceregal Court; and who on coming to town made such a sensation that they were mobbed when they walked in the park by those eager to see them; and on being presented at the Court were heartily kissed by George II; while the well-bred courtiers "clamoured upon chairs and tables" to catch sight of them. Eventually the elder, Maria, married George William, sixth Earl of Coventry, and her sister Elizabeth gained for her husband James, sixth Duke of Hamilton, both of whom were anxious that Joshua Reynolds should hand down to their descendants a semblance of the charms of these beautiful sisters.

Among the men who sat to him was Thomas Lord Montford, famous for his love of menageries, who

had succeeded to the title on 1 January, 1755, on the tragic death of his father, Henry Bromley, first Lord Montford, a notorious gambler. Having spent a great part of his property and accumulated heavy debts by cards, he determined to quit a world in which he had been so unlucky. On the last night of December, 1754, he ordered a supper for himself and some friends at White's Club, at which he seemed more mirthful than ever. Cards followed until midnight struck, when one of his guests, Lord Robert Bertie, raised his glass and drank him a happy new year. At that Lord Montford started and put one hand to his eyes as if to blot out a sight—stark, chill, and ghastly—that rose spectre-like between him and the glowing lights, the uplifted glasses of wine red as blood, the flushed faces of convivial friends, the cards scattered over the green cloth. The voices of those around restored him to a consciousness of his surroundings, and he laughed mockingly at that which had scared him. In the course of the morning he summoned a lawyer and witnesses to his house and with great deliberation made his will. When it had been written out according to his dictation, he had it read over twice paragraph by paragraph, and then asked the lawyer if it would stand good even though he, the testator, were to shoot himself, and was answered that it would. Then rising he said, "Pray stay till I step into the next room." A moment later

and the sound of a pistol was heard. My Lord Montford had shot himself.

Another of his sitters was Sir William Lowther, a man of lovable disposition and genial nature, who died of fever, April, 1756, in his twenty-sixth year, unmarried, leaving an estate worth twenty thousand a year to his cousin and successor, Sir James Lowther, described as being "truly a mad man though too rich to be confined," who in September, 1761, married Margaret, daughter of the Earl of Bute, and in May, 1784, was created first Earl of Lonsdale. Out of his personal estate Sir William left legacies of five thousand pounds each to thirteen of his friends, each of whom being desirous to preserve his memory, commissioned Reynolds to make him a copy of the portrait he had already painted of this generous man.

From remarks made in his confidential conversations with his friends, as well as from statements contained in the addresses he gave in later life, we find that Reynolds's growing reputation was a result of the pains he took in applying his natural talents to his work. James Northcote, his favourite pupil, heard him say, that whenever a new sitter came to him for a portrait he always began it with a full determination to make it the best picture he had ever painted; nor would he allow it to be an excuse for failure to say, "the subject was a bad one for a picture"; there was always

nature, he said, which if well treated was sufficient for the purpose.

Always endeavouring to do his best, always striving to avoid the trite and the commonplace, he was never weary of changing and trying different modes and various effects. "I had always some scheme in my mind, and a perpetual desire to advance. By constantly endeavouring to do my best, I acquired a power of doing that with spontaneous facility, which was at first the whole effort of my mind; and my reward was threefold—the satisfaction resulting from acting on this just principle, improvement in my art, and the pleasure derived from a constant pursuit after excellence. I was always willing to believe that my uncertainty of proceeding in my works—that is, my never being sure of my hand and my frequent alterations—arose from a refined taste which could not acquiesce in anything short of a high degree of excellence." It sometimes happened that by painting and repainting a portrait several times, its final appearance was inferior to its first; but on this being remarked to him he stated that his labour was not wasted, but that he gained ground and improved himself by it, adding, "If you are not bold enough to run the risk of losing, you can never hope to gain."

As the result of his increasing popularity and his untiring industry, which enabled him to paint over a

hundred and twenty persons in the first year of his practice in London, he obtained considerable sums of money; but these he laid out as fast as they were received in buying pictures by Titian, Vandyck, Rembrandt, etc., as he considered their possession the best kind of wealth. For by studying the great masters he believed an artist would find "that certain niceties of expression are capable of being executed, which otherwise we might suppose beyond the reach of art. This gives us a confidence in ourselves; and we are thus invited to endeavour at not only the same happiness of execution, but also at other congenial excellencies. Study indeed consists in learning to see nature, and may be called the art of using other men's minds. By this kind of contemplation and exercise we are taught to think in their way, and sometimes to attain their excellence. Thus, for instance, if I had never seen any of the works of Correggio, I should never perhaps have remarked in nature the expression which I find in one of his pieces; or if I had remarked it, I might have thought it too difficult or perhaps impossible to be executed." When later in life he was accused of adapting certain attitudes or actions in the works of the old masters to his own portraits, his defence was that, "a readiness in taking such hints which escape the dull and ignorant makes, in my opinion, no inconsiderable part of that faculty of the mind which is called genius."

So prosperous did Reynolds become that in 1753 he left his apartments in St. Martin's Lane for a house in Great Newport Street close by, and as at this time, though in his thirty-second year, he apparently had no intention of marrying, he sent to Devonport for his youngest sister Frances, a spinster, to act as his housekeeper. Six years his junior, she resembled him in appearance, and had also some talent for painting, though its limits may be gauged from his remark concerning her copies of his portraits, that they made others laugh and made him cry. Such similitude as existed between them was limited to externals, for as frequently happens between those of close kin, their temperaments differed almost to the point of antagonism. Minor disparities in their characters were that he was singularly placid, methodical, systematic, with the power of putting from his mind the small worries of life which cannot be remedied, and thus disturb its current when dwelt on; while she lived in a perpetual state of irresolution, never knowing her own mind for two consecutive hours, planning one day what she altered in the next, beginning one piece of work only to drop and change it for another, always wavering, never certain, and eternally fretting over trifles.

The removal of Reynolds to Great Newport Street has been described by Northcote as the dawn of his splendour. Here came women of fashion and men of parts to sit for their portraits; for, says the authority

just mentioned, though true taste was wanting, vanity was not, "and the desire to perpetuate the form of self-complacency crowded his sitting-room with women who wished to be transmitted as angels, and with men who wanted to appear as heroes and philosophers. From Reynolds's pencil they were sure to be gratified. The force and felicity of his portraits not only drew around him the opulence and beauty of the nation, but happily gained him the merited honour of perpetuating the features of all the eminent and distinguished men of learning then living; with most of whom, so attractive were his manners as well as his talents, he contracted an intimacy which only ended with his life."

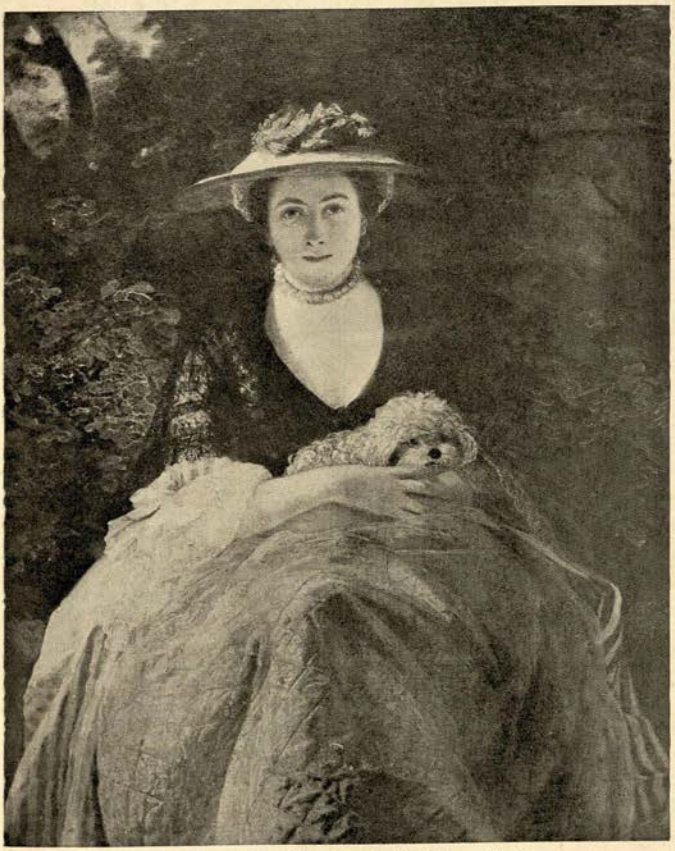
As a result of increasing popularity he raised his prices. In the beginning of his career before his visit to Italy, he had asked merely three guineas for a head; on his return his price was increased but by two guineas; on his removal to Great Newport Street his charge was twelve guineas for a head, twenty-four guineas for a half-length, and forty-eight guineas for a full-length portrait. In January, 1758, his price for a head had risen to twenty guineas. At this time he usually received six sitters daily, and found it necessary to keep a list of those who waited until their turn came to be painted. These he received in the order in which their names were set down in his list. And so crowded was his studio by those who

came to watch the progress of his work or to admire it, that he often complained of being interrupted by fashionable idlers "who do not consider that my time is worth five guineas an hour to me." Six years later and his charges had increased to thirty guineas for a head; from seventy-five to one hundred guineas for a whole length; and from thirty-five to seventy guineas for a half-length portrait.

It was while his reputation was steadily increasing that one who considered himself Reynolds's rival, and was accepted by many as such, suddenly made his appearance in London. This artist, John Stephen Liotard, who was commonly spoken of as the Turk, had the advantage in the eyes of the English public, of being a foreigner. A native of Geneva, his parents had intended to make him a business man, but he had preferred to become an artist. While studying in Rome he had attracted the attention of two Englishmen, the Earls of Sandwich and Bessborough, who on extending their grand tour beyond Europe to Constantinople, took him with them to the Porte. There he adopted the habit of a Turk, which he found so becoming that he had no desire to change it on reaching London, which they persuaded him to visit. This, together with his flowing beard and his assumption of dignity, took the town by storm, and thronged his studio with high-born women who were enchanted at being permitted to stare into his mild eyes, to admire his

flowing robes and graceful carriage, and who were not even frightened from his presence by the exorbitant prices he charged them for their portraits in water-colour or crayons; for according to Horace Walpole, he was "avaricious beyond imagination." The only merit which his portraits were considered to possess was neatness, which according to Reynolds, "as a general rule is the characteristic of a low genius, or rather no genius at all. His pictures," continues the same authority, "are just what ladies do when they paint for their amusement; nor is there any person, how poor soever their talents may be, but in a very few years by dint of practice may possess themselves of every qualification in the art which this *great man* has got."

For all that Liotard's popularity increased. Coaches rumbled to his door all day in quick succession, and sedan-chairs were carried cross his threshold into the spacious hall of his house in Great Queen Street, where dames in sacques and patches, with powdered heads and rouged cheeks, with heels four inches high and fans in hand, stepped on the marble-paved floor, and tripped to his studio that they might be painted by this fascinating charlatan. But towards the end of his second year in town his popularity began to wane; for about that time it began to be discovered that "his heads wanted air and the softness of flesh," and he had in a moment of forgetful-



From the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Photo by W. A. Mansell & Co.

NELLY O'BRIEN.

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ness of what was required of him, actually given freckles and the marks of small-pox to the portrait of one in whom such blemishes existed. Besides, he proved that appearances were deceptive, for although he wore an Eastern costume, his temperament had a Western frigidness. When eventually his sitters had dwindled to insignificant numbers he packed his paint-boxes and sought fame and gold elsewhere.

Thenceforth Joshua Reynolds remained undisputed master in his profession, and working incessantly year in year out, accumulated money enough to enable him to purchase a house in the highly fashionable quarter of Leicester Fields, which had taken its name from the great red-brick house of two stories and an attic, with a spacious court in front and extensive gardens behind, built in the early part of the previous century (1632) by Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester. This residence situated at the north-eastern extremity, had become more notable still as the residence of George II when Prince of Wales, and on his accession, of his son Frederick Prince of Wales, who died there in 1751. Although George III had been born in Norfolk House, St. James's Square, lent at that time, June, 1738, by the Duke of Norfolk to Frederick while his house in Leicester was being repaired, the future monarch, with his brothers and sisters, spent the early part of their lives there—a strange place for a royal residence, considering that not only the adjoin-

ing Haymarket and Cranbourn Alley, but Leicester Fields, were the haunts of abandoned women, bullies, and pickpockets; while the latter place especially, "from the rough and broken state of its ground, and the shadow of a lofty row of elms that then stood in the road in front of most of the houses on the eastern side, was rendered a very dangerous part to pass, particularly before the streets were paved and publicly lighted."

About 1740, the year in which Joshua Reynolds first came to London, Leicester Fields were fitted up in what has been described as an elegant manner, a wall and railings being placed around them, and a basin in the centre after the manner of Lincoln's Inn Fields. The district between them and Fleet Street was then and for years later so sparsely built over, that in 1746, when the heads of the victims of the Scottish Rebellion were fixed on the spikes of Temple Bar, a man with a telescope in Leicester Fields enabled the curious to gratify themselves with a sight of those ghastly objects at the expense of a halfpenny.

It will be remembered that William Hogarth already lived in Leicester Fields at the sign of the Golden Head, so that Reynolds had for a neighbour an artist as distinguished as himself. The house, a lease of which he purchased for one thousand six hundred and fifty pounds, stood in the centre of the

west side of the fields or square, was splendidly proportioned, and contained one of the finest staircases in London. Now, much altered, it is occupied by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson. Before occupying it Reynolds made several additions to it, among them being painting-rooms for his pupils, copyists, and drapery painters, a gallery for his own pictures and those he had bought, and a studio for himself which was octagonal in shape, about twenty feet long and about sixteen in breadth. Northcote tells us that the window which gave light to this room was about half the size of a common window in a private house, and that the lower part of it was nine feet four inches from the ground.

These additions had cost him some fifteen hundred pounds, which together with the purchase of the lease exhausted nearly all his savings. Although he was careful in his expenditure, he believed himself justified not only in outlaying these sums, but in starting a "particularly splendid" carriage, which the envious whispered was "an old chariot of a sheriff of London newly done up." Not only were its panels painted by Charles Catton, the most famous coach decorator of his day, with allegorical figures of the four seasons of the year, but its wheels were partly carved and gilt, and its box blazed with scarlet hammer-cloths. To add to its effects, its coachman's livery was laced with silver. Such a sensation did it cause that the

latter "got money by admitting the curious to a sight of it." As the artist was too busy to take the air in this handsome carriage, he insisted that his sister Fanny should drive about in it as much as possible, that it might be generally seen; but to this she objected being, as Northcote tells us, "a person of great shyness of disposition, as it always attracted the gaze of the populace, and made her quite ashamed to be seen in it. This anecdote, which I heard from this very sister's own mouth," adds the biographer, "serves to show that Joshua Reynolds knew the use of quackery in the world. He knew that it would be inquired whose grand chariot this was, and that when it was told it would give a strong indication of his success, and by that means tend to increase it."

On moving into his new residence in the summer of 1760, he gave a house-warming to his friends, who numbered some of the most fashionable and distinguished personages of the day. On the night when he had bidden them to be his guests, Leicester Fields was noisy with the roll of lumbering coaches in vast numbers, and the loud-voiced abuse and hard swearing of sedan-bearers; and bright with the flambeaux of running footmen and excited link-boys. Inside, the guests were welcomed by Reynolds and his sister, standing on the threshold of the great drawing-room, with its painted ceiling, waxed floor, and panelled walls, its silver sconces bearing multitudes of wax

lights, on its high chimney-piece and on the shelves of its Jacobean cabinets, jars of Worcester delf and great bowls of Nankin china filled with dried leaves of roses and lemon verbena that faintly and deliciously scented the air, which joyously vibrated with the sounds of fiddles and French flutes stationed in the studio gallery, playing minuets which fired the imagination with delights of the graceful measures to be danced before dawn.

Group after group, with profound courtesy and glowing smile, came women in short-skirted long-waisted gowns, very low round bosom and shoulder, the waist slim and laced in front like a bodice, the sleeves tight to the elbow, where they ended in a profusion of lace; over this gown a sacque of rich brocade open in front, hanging from the shoulders, and ending in a train; a frilled apron completing the costume; their hair, powdered, stuffed with wool and stiffened with pomade, arranged to last a week or a fortnight, during which time the wearers of such coiffures were supposed to sleep in chairs; their throats and bosoms adorned with several rows of gold chains, that tied round the neck, fell in festoons; bracelets over long gloves; silver-spangled high-heeled shoes; patches on cheek and chin; fan or scent-bottle in hand. With them came men in long-waisted coats of various colours, rose-pink, apple-green, brilliant scarlet, cerulean blue, with bindings of gold and silver lace,

gold buttons and loops, satin breeches and silk stockings, lace ruffles at the chest, and round the neck a band of black ribbon having a large bow in front; their handkerchiefs lace-trimmed and scented, their eyebrows artificially arched, and occasionally their cheeks rouged, their heads powdered, patches on their faces, snuff-boxes in hand, diamond buckles on their shoes.

Bows were exchanged, finger-tips were worshippingly raised to lips, fans were furled and unfurled, high-sounding compliments were paid and received with languishing smiles, snuff was taken, scandal whispered, love made, cards were played and minuets and gavottes danced till night passed and rosy morning peeped upon the scene.

While his rooms were thronged with gracious women and distinguished men, while dancers moved in stately measures to quaint music—high heels tapping oak floors, brocaded skirts rustling, jewels flashing—while beauty and grace, light and colour gave an air of fantasy to this feast, Joshua Reynolds, thoughtful, not without just pride in his fame and its attendant rewards, looked on the dazzling kaleidoscope and contrasted his present with the days of his youth, when paper and pencils for his use were beyond the reach of his parents' means.

CHAPTER III

Joshua Reynolds attracts the society of distinguished men—The early days of Samuel Johnson—His poverty while at Oxford—Marries Tetty Porter, and opens an academy for young gentlemen—He seeks his fortune in London—He writes for the Gentleman's Magazine—Writes the Life of the poet Savage, and begins to compile his dictionary—Writes a tragedy—David Garrick begins his career as a player—The performance of Johnson's tragedy—He loses his wife—His meeting with Joshua Reynolds—Is carried to the artist's house—He is mistaken for a burglar—Hogarth's meeting with Johnson—Samuel Richardson and his novel Pamela—Extraordinary popularity of the book—He is visited by women of fashion—He entertains his admirers at Hammersmith—The opinions of his correspondents—My Lady Bradshaigh's letters—Pleading for the divine Clarissa—Tears, idle tears—Her ladyship visits town—Richardson's description of his personal appearance—He haunts the park in the hope of seeing his correspondent—He is disappointed and chagrined—In Joseph Highmore's studio—Richardson discovers the name of his correspondent—They meet—His novel is burlesqued—Henry Fielding's parody on Pamela—The beginning of Fielding's career—His hot, high spirit and recklessness—Writing for the theatres—Bill regarding plays and players introduced by the Lord Chamberlain—Henry Fielding becomes acquainted with David Garrick—The sale of Joseph Andrews—Richardson's resentment—Fielding writes another play, the Wedding Day—Publication of Tom Jones and Amelia.

A MAN of genius, with that kindness of heart which is usually the source of a gracious manner, Joshua Reynolds quickly attracted to himself the foremost men of talent of his day. One of the

first of these, the most notable of all, was Samuel Johnson, who had at the time of their meeting passed through various stages of his career. The son of a struggling bookseller at Lichfield in Staffordshire, he had in his earliest years been touched by Queen Anne for the king's evil, from which he grievously suffered all his life; had been taught Latin by a master who flogged his pupils unmercifully that he might save them from the gallows; and had at the age of nineteen been entered as a commoner of Pembroke College, Oxford, where he was so wretchedly poor that at one time he was unable to attend lectures because his feet appeared through his broken shoes; and so proud that he indignantly flung away a new pair left on his doorstep.

Obliged to leave Oxford on account of his father's insolvency, he became an usher at a school where he suffered from many indignities, escaping from which he employed himself in translating books. While struggling to support himself he fell in love with a widow as poor as himself, almost double his age, and encumbered with a family. His first appearance before this mature lady, Mrs. Porter, was not calculated to win her affections; for "his appearance was very forbidding; he was then lean and lank, so that his immense structure of bones was hideously striking to the eye, and the scars of the scrofula were deeply visible. He also wore his hair, which was straight and

stiff, and separated behind; and he often had seemingly convulsive starts and odd gesticulations which tended to excite at once surprise and ridicule." For all that, he and his conversation were so entertaining to the lonely widow, that she told her daughter, who is responsible for the foregoing description of him, he was the most sensible man she had ever seen in her life.

She accepted his devotion, married, and lived happily with him at the private academy which he set up at Edial, near Lichfield, where young gentlemen were boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages. His pupils were few, but among them was young David Garrick the son of an officer in the army, of French lineage, and of a mother of Irish descent, parentage that accounts for his genius. While Johnson trained their minds, their bodily welfare was looked after by Tetty, as he called his wife, a lady whom Garrick described as "very fat, with a bosom of more than ordinary protuberance, with swelled cheeks of a florid red produced by thick painting and increased by the liberal use of cordials; flaring and fantastic in her dress, and affected both in her speech and general behaviour." Her husband's oddities of manner and uncouth gesticulations did not escape the notice of the young rogues, who used to make merry over his "tumultuous and awkward fondness" for his robust and ridiculous spouse.

Johnson's academy for young gentlemen had a brief

and disastrous existence, so that closing its doors he set out to seek his fortune in London, with part of a tragedy and twopence-halfpenny in his pocket. Tetty, in all the glory of her rouge and flamboyant-hued raiment, was left behind at Lichfield; but David Garrick accompanied him with the intention of becoming a law student. Johnson had been assured that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live in London without being contemptible; and immediately he began to test the truth of that statement. Living in a garret in Exeter Street, Strand, he dined very well and with very good company on a cut of meat that cost sixpence and a piece of bread costing a penny. Then by spending threepence on coffee, he had claim to a seat in a comfortable tavern, an occasional glance at the news sheets, and the right to have his letters addressed there.

Once in London, his struggle for bread began. He translated for the booksellers, wrote prose and verse for the "Gentleman's Magazine," essays and epitaphs for whoever ordered them; a poem called "London," for which, after hard bargaining, he received ten guineas; and the Life of one he had known well—the poet Richard Savage, a man of genius and an irreclaimable profligate, who pursued by bailiffs, imprisoned, starved, and scorned, had ended his miserable days in July, 1743. This biography one of the most interesting, one of the saddest records

of the temptations and sufferings that frequently haunt genius—was written in such haste that forty-eight pages of its printed octavo pages were produced at a single sitting. For this Life Johnson received fifteen guineas.

To illustrate the straits and circumstances of those who lived by literature at this time, it may be mentioned that shortly after the biography was brought out, its publisher entertained at dinner Walter Harte, author of the "Life of Gustavus Adolphus," who during the meal, heartily praised the "Life of Richard Savage." A few days later when Cave met his guest, he assured him that he had made a man very happy by what he had said of the book at dinner. Harte inquired how that could be, as there was nobody present but themselves? When Cave "answered by reminding him that a plate of victuals was sent behind a screen, which was to Johnson, dressed so shabbily that he did not choose to appear; but on hearing the conversation he was highly delighted with the encomiums on his book."

A proposal for an edition of Shakespeare's works, to be edited by himself, not having been accepted, Johnson next offered to undertake a dictionary of the English language, which was accepted by the booksellers, who jointly agreed to give him one thousand five hundred and seventy-five pounds for his labour, which he estimated would take him but three years

to finish. On being told that the French Academy which consisted of forty members, took forty years to compile their dictionary, Johnson replied: "This is the proportion. Let me see, forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three to sixteen hundred, so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman."

An important event in his career now happened. His tragedy named "Irene" had long ago been finished, had been offered to and rejected by Fleetwood the patentee of Drury Lane Theatre, and had for upwards of nine years lain in the author's desk. But during that time David Garrick—soon to become the close friend of Joshua Reynolds—had abandoned his intention of becoming a lawyer, as later he forsook his business as a wine merchant, and running the risk of for ever estranging himself from his brothers and sisters living in the odour of respectability and by the sale of vinous liquors at Lichfield, became a player even while beseeching them not to be ashamed to own him as a relative.

He had therefore made his first appearance before a London audience on the 19th October, 1741, at Goodman's Fields Theatre, Whitechapel, taking the leading part in "The Life and Death of King Richard the Third," which was performed between the first and second part of a concert of vocal and instrumental music. Notwithstanding the grievous shock which his conduct gave his brother Peter, and the sore un-

easiness which the expression of that shock gave to David, the latter resolved against all entreaties to continue his career as a player; for his immediate success had made him the one topic of the coffee-houses; had brought "from the polite ends of Westminster the most elegant company, so that from Temple Bar the whole way was covered with a string of coaches"; had made men of parts desirous to take him by the hand and to offer him civilities and hospitalities; and had gained him the handsome salary of six guineas a week with a clear benefit.

Having played in Dublin in the summer, he was engaged for Covent Garden Theatre in the autumn and winter, but in the following year was drawing enormous audiences to Drury Lane Theatre, of which he became joint manager in April, 1747. Though Johnson frequently expressed his contempt for players, whom he compared to the puppets in a Punch and Judy show, and resented the fact that his pupil—whose talents he classed far below his own, and who had come to town at the same time as himself and in the same impecunious condition—had won fame and fortune while he was still struggling for a living, yet Garrick was his constant companion; and while he indulged himself in soundly rating Davy at times, he would never permit another to speak a disparaging word of him.

Now that Garrick was in a position to serve his

former master and present friend, he used it by offering to place "Irene" on the stage and to impersonate its chief character. This Johnson accepted; but when on reading the tragedy Garrick found some alterations were necessary to make it suitable for the theatre, its author would not hear of lines being cut out that had given him much pride and pleasure, and verbally belaboured Davy. The latter making allowances for and still desirous to benefit the author, asked a common friend to reason with him. To this individual Johnson said: "Sir, the fellow wants me to make Mahomet run mad that he may have an opportunity of tossing his hands and kicking his heels." Eventually he was persuaded to allow some changes to be made, though these were not enough to render it acceptable to the public.

On the night of its first production all his friends and many of his admirers were present to welcome and applaud a work which it was believed would give a classic to the stage. He himself sat in a side box, specially dressed for the occasion in all the glory of a scarlet waistcoat trimmed with rich gold lace, and a gold-laced hat. But they and he were somewhat alarmed by hearing cat-calls and whistling in the gallery before the curtain went up, showing that a boisterous spirit was in the house. The acting of Garrick, Barry, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Cibber gained a quiet hearing for the play until the last act, when on the

heroine endeavouring to speak two stately lines with the bowstring round her neck, the gallery interrupted her by crying out "murder, murder," and general confusion followed, which prevented the lady from uttering her dying words and obliged her to make her exit from the stage a living woman. Though on the succeeding eight nights of its run she was put to death behind the scenes, and thus removed from vulgar comments, the tragedy failed to please the public. The author's fees resulting from the three benefit nights allowed him amounted to one hundred and ninety-five pounds seventeen shillings, while he received from Dodsley, the bookseller, one hundred pounds for the right of publishing the tragedy. His failure was borne by him with philosophy, and instead of deriding the public for want of taste he wisely declared that a man who wrote a book or a play, though he thought himself wittier or wiser than the rest of mankind, must submit to those to whom he appeals and who must be the best judges of his pretensions.

The great sorrow of his life came when in March, 1752, he lost his ponderous and beloved Tetty. Some eighteen months after he had settled in London she had joined him there; but not finding the neighbourhood of Fleet Street, where her husband lived, suitable to her health or taste, she had taken lodgings in the village of Hampstead, where "she indulged herself in country air and nice living at an unsuitable

expense, while her husband was drudging in the smoke of London." Her absence from him and the fact that she did not "treat him with that complacency which is the most engaging quality in a wife," did not lessen his admiration for her, and on her death in his house in Gough Square his grief was excessive. For a time work was impossible to him, and though his strong will strove to restrain his feelings before others, for many weeks he could not speak of her without showing the strongest emotion. A little later than a month after her death, the hour "being after twelve at night," he felt compelled to write the following remarkable prayer :—

"O Lord, Governor of heaven and earth, in Whose hands are embodied and departed spirits, if Thou hast ordained the souls of the dead to minister to the living, and appointed my departed wife to have the care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or in any other manner agreeable to Thy government. Forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and however meaner objects are employed, grant me the blessed influences of Thy Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

A year later he wrote :—

"I kept this day as the anniversary of my Tetty's death, with prayer and tears in the morning. In the

evening I prayed for her conditionally, if it were lawful. And O Lord, so far as it may be lawful in me, I commend to Thy fatherly goodness the soul of my departed wife; beseeching Thee to grant her whatever is best in her present state, and finally to receive her to eternal happiness."

It was while Johnson was still mourning the loss of his wife that he met Joshua Reynolds who was to become his lifelong friend. After the latter had returned from Italy and while resting himself at Plymouth, he had one day as he was standing with his arm leaning on a chimneypiece, begun to read Johnson's "Life of Richard Savage," and knowing nothing of its author, had at first glanced over the pages carelessly, but presently became so absorbed in them that unconsciously retaining the same attitude, he found on closing the book that his arm had become quite numbed. His admiration for this biography led him to desire the acquaintance of its author, but this was not gratified until some twelve months after he had settled in London, and was then brought about by what is known as accident.

Calling one afternoon on two ladies, the daughters of Admiral Cotterell, Reynolds found them in their drawing-room talking to a man of great bulk, his figure slightly stooped, his eyes short-sighted, and his dress slovenly. Introductions followed and the painter found that this was the author whose writings

he greatly admired. For a while he listened with attention to Johnson's balanced sentences, and then on hearing the Misses Cotterell regret the death of a friend to whom they owed many obligations, Reynolds remarked, "You have however the comfort of being relieved from a burden of gratitude." To place truth so nakedly before them was to shock the sensitive feelings of those excellent ladies, but Johnson defended Reynolds, whom he regarded with interest as a man who had ability enough to think for himself; and whom he treated with such friendliness that the painter carried him home to supper and introduced him to his sister Fanny.

From that time forward Johnson became a constant visitor at the Reynolds household, a frequent guest at their table; and though as he kept late hours and enjoyed drinking an unlimited number of cups of tea after supper, Reynolds occasionally left him that he might visit his friends, yet Johnson did not resent this desertion but was quite satisfied with the company of Fanny Reynolds, whom he held in the highest esteem, and whom he came to address as "Renny dear." And while he considered portrait painting an improper employment for a lady, saying that "the public practise of an art and staring in men's faces is very indelicate in a female," yet the day came when he allowed her to paint his portrait. That his vanity was hurt by her effort may be taken for

From the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

MISS FRANCES REYNOLDS.

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granted, for he described it as "Johnson's grimly ghost."

Frances Reynolds delighted to hear the great man talk to her, felt honoured by the company and friendship of one who was so esteemed that "gentlemen continued to pass and repass him purposely to feed their sight upon so excellent and learned a character," as Northcote tells us; and seldom failed to cheer him when those dark fits of depression to which he was subjected settled on him. There was however an occasion when it took all her powers to soothe his wounded pride. This was one afternoon when she with her brother and Johnson called on the Misses Cotterell. Unfortunately the door was opened to them, not as usual by the footman, but by a maid-servant who had not seen Johnson before, and who alarmed at beholding his uncouth, slovenly-clad figure mounting the stairs, laid hold of him roughly by the coat and pulling him back said, "You fellow, what is your business here? I suppose you intend to rob the house"; an unlucky accident which we are told threw the philosopher into such a fit of shame and anger that he roared out like a bull, for he could not immediately articulate, and was with difficulty at last able to utter, "What have I done? What have I done?" and refused to be consoled for the remainder of the evening either by his hostesses or by his "Renny dear."

Before he had become acquainted with Reynolds, Johnson had come into contact with another distinguished artist, William Hogarth. The date of their meeting was the summer of 1753, shortly after the execution as a rebel of Dr. Archibald Cameron, a brother to the chief of the Camerons of Lochiel. This unfortunate man had after the Scottish rebellion in which he had taken some part, gone abroad and obtained the position of colonel in the French army; but returning to the Highlands seven years later when the country was in a tranquil state, to settle some family affairs, he had been arrested, tried, and executed. In calling on Samuel Richardson the novelist soon after this event, Hogarth who was a warm partisan of George II, argued that some unfavourable circumstance in connexion with Archibald Cameron must have induced His Majesty to approve of an execution for rebellion so long after the time it was committed, as to have the appearance of putting a man to death in cold blood.

Boswell who relates the story says that while Hogarth was talking "he perceived a person standing at a window in the room, shaking his head and rolling himself about in a strange ridiculous manner. He concluded that he was an idiot whom his relations had put under the care of Mr. Richardson as a very good man. To his great surprise however this figure stalked forward to where he and Mr. Richardson

were sitting, and all at once took up the argument and burst out into an invective against George the Second as one who upon all occasions was unrelenting and barbarous, mentioning many instances, particularly that when an officer of high rank had been acquitted by a court-martial, George the Second had with his own hand struck his name off the list. In short he displayed such a power of eloquence, that Hogarth looked at him with astonishment and actually imagined that this idiot had been at the moment inspired."

Samuel Richardson, printer of the Daily Journal, the Daily Gazetteer, and of the Journals of the House of Commons, had sprung into sudden fame a couple of months after Joshua Reynolds had first come to London by the publication of his novel "Pamela: or Virtue Rewarded." Originally begun as a volume of letters "in a common style on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves," it presently occurred to their writer that a story embodied in them and "written in an easy and natural manner, suitably to the simplicity of it, might possibly introduce a new species of writing that might possibly turn young people into a course of reading different from the pomp and parade of romance writing, and dismissing the improbable and marvellous with which novels generally abound, might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue."

In this way was produced the story of a young girl, Pamela, born of poor and pious parents, who had been taken by a lady of quality to wait on her, and who after the death of that benefactress was subjected by her profligate son to those violent temptations that await on unprotected virtue. It was not until she had suffered severe trials, had indulged in unlimited platitudes, had escaped marvellously through barred windows and over high brick walls, had entertained the suggestion of suicide "until considerations of piety at length prevailed," that the young gentleman of fortune eventually professed honourable love and offered her his hand in marriage—a high stake for which Pamela had played from the beginning. This tract in the shape of a novel written in a series of letters—pedantic, sentimental, inflated, and without a sparkle of humour—met with instant and surprising success, as unaccountable as that gained by some pretentious, flamboyant, and ridiculous romances of the present day. Though "Pamela" is as unknown to the present generation as some popular modern fiction will be twenty years hence, its vogue was extraordinary.

At Ranelagh women of fashion carried a volume of "Pamela," to show their taste for elegant literature. Johnson sententiously spoke of its author as one who had "enlarged the knowledge of human nature and taught the passions to move at the command of

virtue"; Alexander Pope was of opinion it would do more good than volumes of sermons; Lucas, the esteemed author of "The Search after Happiness," thought "Pamela" the best book ever published, and calculated to do the most good; while Chetwynd declared that "if all other books were to be burned, this book next to the Bible ought to be preserved." Nay, a parson was found who was obliging enough to make it the subject of a sermon; an Italian dramatist Goldini, converted it into a comedy; it was translated into French, Dutch, and German; and finally Madame Deffand wrote to tell Horace Walpole that when "Pamela" was read aloud in her salon, all the company were dissolved in tears; and to ask him for a description of the gentleman who had written the novel; and was shocked to hear in reply, it was not written by a gentleman, but by a most gentlemanly tradesman.

A sequel to "Pamela" followed; then was published "Clarissa Harlowe," four volumes of which came out in 1747 and four more in the following year; while later still in 1753, Richardson wrote a novel originally called "The Good Man," a title which was changed to "Sir Charles Grandison." Although it was then considered beneath their dignity for ladies of the west end of the town to pass Temple Bar, yet they were so daring in their disregard of the conventionalities as to seek this elegant author in his house in Salisbury Court, off Fleet Street. Here these languishing

women who concealed their vulgar curiosity under the pretext of not being satisfied "to be entertained by his writings in their closet," and of being compelled to seek instruction at its source, were received by this plump-bodied, bright-complexioned, much-honoured little man, who though wholly averse to notoriety, concealed his repugnance so cleverly as to lead the superficial to believe he sought and enjoyed it. With a vanity that might seem impossible if modern examples were not before us, he regarded the foolish prattle of his illiterate visitors as the voice of fame; and welcoming them to his well-ordered library, offered them chocolate and begged them to partake of fruit with a simplicity that enabled them to see the sublime elevation of his soul. Here they gazed with amazement and adoration on this "divine man," as they termed him; kissed his ink-bottle; spoke to him touchingly of the sensibilities of the human heart, which he had revealed in so marvellous a manner as to make Pamela spring up and overturn the card-table at the unexpected sight of her father; or to put into her lips the words, "See, it only blistered my hands in two places," when on preferring virtuous poverty to shameful riches, she strove to accustom herself to the work of a kitchen wench by scrubbing pewter,—an amazing delineation of human nature.

In return they heard from him personal details, of absorbing interest to himself, concerning the tremors

that shook him on writing certain passages in his books that appealed to his finer sensibilities; his general state of nervousness that prevented him from mixing with crowds; the exact quantity of tar-water which he drank as a cure; the amount of exercise he took daily on a chamber horse; the causes that hindered him from eating flesh and fish, or from drinking wine; communications which were received with as much gravity as they were related. Many favoured females who called at Salisbury Court were invited to visit him at his handsome country house situated at North End, a few paces from the turnpike at Hammersmith, which in later times was to become the residence of Sir Edward Burne-Jones. To this house, two stories high, with a porticoed entrance, "its parlours distinct as well as its bedchambers," its front separated from the high road by railings and iron gates, spacious gardens at its back, Richardson came from Salisbury Court for week-ends that his health might be amended by fresh air, and that on peaceful Sunday afternoons in summer-time he might sit under the shadow of old oaks, the centre of a worshipping circle consisting of his second wife who treated him with respectful reverence, of his daughters who addressed him as "honoured sir," and of his venerating visitors one of whom declared that "everything seen and tasted here savoured of the golden age."

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Fulsome and foolish as were the flatteries paid to him verbally and received as fitting tributes to his genius, they were wholly insignificant in comparison with the adulation written to him by men as well as by women, known or unknown to him, who spoke of the characters in his books as if they were living persons with whom their deepest interests were concerned. To these he replied in the same spirit, answering their inane inquiries, explaining his reasons for making his characters act as they did, and devoting such time and thought to his answers as would have enabled him to write volumes.

A selection of these letters which it had been his greatest gratification to arrange in his last years, was published in five volumes to satisfy, as their publisher said, "the curiosity of the public which has always shown an eagerness, more natural perhaps than strictly justifiable, to penetrate into the domestic retirements, and to be introduced to the companionable hours of eminent characters." Before referring to the main subject of these letters, it may be said that among them, fault is found with Richardson only in two instances: the first by a clergyman who objects "to the word silly as applied to a parson," and the second by a clever woman, Mrs. Delany, who thinks "the words intellect and ethics as too scholastic to proceed from the mouth of a female."

The general run of the correspondence teems with

amazing flattery. Warburton, the editor of an edition of Shakespeare—who, according to Johnson, had a rage for saying something when there was nothing to be said—in speaking of the trials of one of Richardson's characters, "a young creature involved in passion," declared it was "absolute pedantry to prefer and compare the madness of Orestes in Euripides to this of Cleminta"; Lord Orrery on his own behalf and that of his family, thanks him for sleepless nights and sore eyes, the result of reading of Clarissa's trials; Aron Hill, who wrote several poor plays and some rhymed lines in praise of that imperial scoundrel Peter the Great, and who appreciated his own writings so much as to declare they would be read when the works of Pope were forgotten, snatched his pen to inquire of Richardson, who would dream of finding "under the modest disguise of a novel, all the soul of religion, good breeding, discretion, good nature, wit, fancy, fine thought, and morality"? He added that since "Pamela" had come into his hands he had done nothing else but read it, because "if I lay down the book it comes after me, and when it has dwelt all day long upon the ear, its takes possession all night of the fancy. It has witchcraft in every page of it, but it is the witchcraft of passion and meaning."

A correspondent who signed herself "Philaretes" assured Richardson that "Since I have heard that you

design that the end of 'Clarissa' shall be unhappy, I am determined to read no more; I should read the account of her death with as much anguish of mind as I should feel at the loss of my dearest friend." Three young ladies informed him they dreamt of him by night, and had the liveliest foretaste of his characters. A mistress told him that while her hair was being curled a friend read aloud the seventh volume of "Clarissa," when the maid "let fall such a shower of tears upon her mistress's head that she was forced to send her out of the room to compose herself," after first asking her what she cried about, and receiving the answer that it was to hear of such goodness and innocence in distress; for which reply the reader, following her, gave her half a crown. Cleomira declared it was a pity Richardson "was not a woman and blessed with means of shining as Clarissa did; for a person capable of drawing such a character would certainly be able to act in the same manner if in a like situation." While a Miss Highmore expressed herself in a sympathetic manner by saying, "What must have been your feelings at the time you wrote what nobody can read without streaming eyes and heart-broken sorrow? It has had the same effect on my father and mother as on myself. We could none of us read aloud the affecting scenes we met with, but each read to ourselves, and in separate apartments wept."

The most fluent and entertaining of all Richardson's correspondents was the wife of Sir Roger Bradshaigh, Bart., of Haigh near Wigan in Lancashire, where, we are told in elegant language, they lived in the "true English style of country gentry, before the villa of the manufacturer had eclipsed by its ephemeral splendour the paternal seat of the hereditary landlord." A woman without children, but with ample time, an abundance of sentimentality, and a craze for excitement, she had on reading the first part of "Clarissa Harlowe" desired to communicate with Richardson, that she might plead for his heroine. But as she was unwilling that it should be known she had condescended to correspond with an author, she wrote to him under the name of Belfour, "acquainting him that a report prevailed that the 'History of Clarissa' was to end in a most tragical manner, expressing her abhorrence of such a catastrophe, and begging to be acquainted with the truth by a few lines inserted in the 'Whitehall Evening Post.'"

Richardson gladly did as requested, and then received from "Belfour" a series of letters, carried on for about eighteen months under her *nom de plume*, his replies being addressed to the post office at Exeter, to be left till called for. Those she wrote him in the beginning of their correspondence expressed a concern for Clarissa that could not be greater if that heroine were a human being whose fate lay in Rich-

ardson's hands. After an hysterical appeal covering several pages, to save "the divine Clarissa" from the brink of destruction, to save the compassionate from tears for irremediable woes, she adds, "Pray, sir, make her happy; you can so easily do it. Pray, reform him. Will you not save a soul, sir?" Then after further petitioning comes the climax: "If you disappoint me, attend to my curse;—May the hatred of the young, beautiful, and virtuous for ever be your portion; may your eyes never behold anything but age and deformity; may you meet with applause only from envious old maids, surly bachelors, and tyrannical parents; may you be doomed to the company of such, and after death may their ugly souls haunt you. Now make Lovelace and Clarissa unhappy if you dare."

Taking all this in the uttermost seriousness, Richardson wrote her many pages of platitudes, telling her she could not imagine how sensibly he was grieved for the pain the story had given her, and praying God might forbid that anything unhappy or disastrous should ever fall to the lot of a lady so generously sensible to the woes of others as she must be who could be so deeply affected by a moral tale, though its chief character never existed. In the course of his letters he gives details of his personal appearance, the colour of his clothes, the places and houses he frequented, the repeated blows by eleven

affecting deaths from which his nerves had suffered and that obliged him to deny himself all public diversions, and to "labour through the whole medical process by direction of eminent physicians."

As a final illustration of the bathos in which a woman of this period was capable of indulging, an extract from a letter written by Lady Bradshaigh on reading of the death of Clarissa Harlowe may be given. With a body weakened from pain, and with a hand trembling from emotion, the poor lady sat down to tell its author of the suffering she had gone through at reading his most moving narration. "I verily believe," she says, "I have shed a pint of tears, and my heart is still bursting though they cease not to flow at this moment, nor will I fear for some time. Talk not of tragedies, I can now bear any; the deepest pain they give is momentary and trifling compared with your long dwelt upon and well told story. It was purely out of gratitude, and to oblige you I read your last three volumes. I expected to suffer, but not to that degree I have suffered. Had you seen me I surely should have moved your pity. When alone, in agonies would I lay down the book, take it up again, walk about the room, let fall a flood of tears, wipe my eyes, read again, throw away the book crying out, 'Excuse me, good Mr. Richardson, I cannot go on,' throw myself upon my couch to compose. Again I read, again I acted the same part,

sometimes agreeably interrupted by my dear man, who was at that time labouring through the sixth volume with a heart capable of impressions equal to my own. Seeing me so moved he begged for God's sake I would read no more, kindly threatened to take the book from me, but upon my pleading suffered me to go on. I am thankful the heavy task is over, though the effects are not. My spirits are strongly seized, my sleep is disturbed; waking in the night I burst into a passion of crying; so I did at breakfast this morning, and just now again. . . . To be sure these effects must wear off in a little time. I hope so, but I'll tell you what will be a durable concern to me, that I have lost an amusement I had set my heart upon, and that I must lock up such a history from my sight never more to be looked into; for I do not think anything could hire or engage me to read over again what I have read within these few days."

This letter ends with a hint that its writer will travel to town before long and contrive to see the author, though perhaps unknown to him. The mere thought of their meeting threw Richardson into an ardour, which he declares he with difficulty suppressed, and he at once wrote to beg that she and her good man might be his guests at his little habitation at Hammersmith, where there were common conveniences though not splendid, and where she could pass as the cousin or sister of his unknown

one, and never be addressed as other than she wished. However, he will submit to her conditions or restrictions, and in case she wishes to see him while remaining herself unknown, he tells her that he goes through St. James's Park once or twice a week to his retirement; but he will for a week together be in it every day three or four hours at her command till she had seen a person who answered to the description of himself that followed. "Short; rather plump than emaciated notwithstanding his complaints; about five foot five inches; fair wig; lightish cloth coat, all black besides; one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat usually, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support when attacked by sudden tremors or startings and dizziness which too frequently attack him; looking directly foreright, as passers-by would imagine, but observing all that stirs on either hand of him without moving his short neck; hardly ever turning back; of a light brown complexion; teeth not yet failing him; smoothish faced and ruddy cheeked; at some times looking to be about sixty-five, at others much younger; a regular even pace stealing away ground rather than seeming to rid it; a grey eye too often overclouded by mistiness from the head; by chance lively; very lively will it be if he have hope of seeing a lady whom he loves and honours."

Lady Bradshaigh, who—judging from the fact she frequently referred to, that she had been wooed for ten years before accepting her husband, as well as from her conduct towards Richardson,—was a born coquette, refused to accept his invitation to stay in his house on the ground of her bashfulness, but let him know that she would soon be in town, when she would strive to steal into his acquaintance; and that she would attend the Park every fine day between the hours of one and two, when perhaps he might observe a middle-aged, middle-sized person, a degree above plump, brown as an oak wainscot, a good deal of country red in her cheeks, and altogether a plain woman, but nothing forbidding.

A short time after this communication was written she was staying in lodgings in New Bond Street, though Richardson was kept as unaware of her address as he was of her name. It was probably that she might add a greater air of mystery to her correspondence with him, that instead of making use of the penny post, she preferred to leave her letters for him at the bookseller's. In telling him of a visit she had hurriedly paid to one of them, Millar in the Strand, she says she was nearly frightened out of her wits "for fear of being detected in the act I there committed. A large sheet of paper lying upon the counter, I very dexterously conveyed my parcel under it, and run out of the shop as if I had stole something

out of it rather than left anything in it, waded across the street up to my ankles in dirt, and got well pleased though flurried to my party, who were waiting for me in an adjacent street."

As she would not visit him at Hammersmith, or meet him at the houses of his female worshippers, a list of whom he gave her in the hope that she would find an acquaintance among them, this foolish person haunted St. James's Park, where he hoped to see one who had so generously ministered to his vanity. "Though prevented from going to my little retirement on the Saturday that I had the pleasure of receiving your letter," he writes to her, "yet I went into the Park on Sunday, it being a very fine day, in hopes of seeing such a lady as you describe, contenting myself with dining as I walked on a sea biscuit which I had put in my pocket; my family at home all the while knowing not what was become of me." On the following Saturday he walked backwards and forwards in the Mall until past her time for being there; as he did also on other Saturdays, thinking that she would be carried in a chair and there make herself known.

In return she assured him that she was dressing for Court on the first Saturday he mentioned, and that she never visited the Park upon a Sunday, but she told him she had walked round Salisbury Court, had her foot on his doorstep, her hand upon the knocker, and then drew back as she could not do sufficient

violence to her inclinations and overcome her bashfulness, and so turned away, conscious that she must check her ardour. "I do not," says this mature matron, "expect or desire to be taken for a rose in June; and to be looked upon as a common flower is all I can hope for. If that is too much, I'll condescend to be put down a thistle, if you please." More tantalised than ever, he begged she would name a place for their interview. "Consider, dear lady, how long you have been in town, and yet you have never done me the desired favour. Dear, dear lady, name some day, some happy hour," he implored.

As she still desired to perplex him, Richardson, now past his sixtieth year, again exposed himself, as he describes it, to a gay crowd in St. James's Park, in the hope of seeing her in the Mall. The description of his afternoon there can receive justice only from his own pen. "I was very much indisposed all Friday night and all Saturday," he tells her; "yet this hope of an interview kept me in some spirits. A young lady and my second daughter were to accompany me to North End. That umbrage might not be given you, it was agreed that they should make two visits by the way, the last at Whitehall, and then go and wait for me at such distance in the Park as should not be in sight of any lady who might approach me. I walked up and down the path between the trees and the Mall, my eyes indeed engaged amongst the multi-

tude, looking for a certain gill-o'-th'-wisp, whom not seeing, or anybody who by her looks as I had hoped she would, gave me the least intimation of herself. Yet she cannot be come, thought I—nor yet—nor yet; and so continued walking, expecting, and sometimes fretting, till the Mall was vacant of ladies. I gave this lady an honest description of myself, thought I; and after the young lady and my daughter then walked I, extremely tired and fatigued, and joined them on the upper part of Constitution Hill; made my five miles at least nine; the sauntering four fatiguing me twice as much as five. I was so ill that, though I had very agreeable company at home, I was obliged to retire some hours sooner than otherwise I should have chosen. I am now but indifferent. Lord, Lord, what a figure I make, at this time of life too. I have been in high dudgeon ever since."

As may be imagined, this artless man was vastly "disappointed and chagrined" at hearing from this middle-aged coquette that not only had she been in the Park on the afternoon he was there, but that she knew him from his own description three hundred yards away, had passed him four times, when she had an "opportunity of surveying him unobserved and of satisfying her curiosity," as she frankly told him; while at the same time she not only passed him without speaking, but at his approach "put on an unconcerned countenance" lest he might imagine her to

be his correspondent. True to her character, on being mildly reproached for this behaviour, she wrote to him, "To be sure I ought to have given you some hint that I had satisfied my curiosity, since I might suppose, as you came there with that obliging intent, you would stay till you had received some such hint."

It was only by accident that Richardson eventually discovered the real name of his correspondent. The vogue of his novels having suggested to an artist of indifferent merit, Joseph Highmore, the idea of painting twelve scenes from "Pamela"; an imaginary portrait of Clarissa "drawn at whole length in the Vandyck taste and dress, and with great intelligence, sweetness, and dignity"; together with a picture of the Harlowe family and a portrait of their creator, all fashionable London flocked to his studio in Holborn Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields, to see them. Among others came Lady Bradshaigh and Sir Roger, when she showed such an interest in the pictures, betrayed such a knowledge of the story of the Harlowe family, and such emotion at seeing the likeness of their creator, that the artist, being one of the many friends of the author who had been lent the letters addressed to him by inane and appreciative women of quality, and who was acquainted with the mystery surrounding one of them, immediately suspected that she was the fat unknown.

When next Highmore saw Richardson he told him of his suspicions, and described to him the pair who had recently visited him, how they came in a landau; "that the gentleman appeared to be very much of a gentleman; was dressed plain; that the lady was of good stature, rather plump than otherwise, lively, good-humoured; great politeness between her and the gentleman, yet great ease and unaffectedness; sound health promised by the lady's complexion, and looking as a lady accustomed to reside in the country." All this tallying with the details she had already given of herself to Richardson, he also was certain she must be the same who had written to him under the name of Belfour. Accordingly when she again visited the studio Highmore sent his man-servant to make inquiries as to her name from her coachman, when the long-guarded secret was made known to Richardson.

This did not result in an immediate interview, for which he continued to beg, she stating that on being known to him she felt a far greater stranger than before, and requesting that he would never let it be known that she had corresponded with him; for says she, "though I glory in it myself, and have with pride confessed it to some select friends, yet I know by the ill-judging and the envious I should be thought conceited and too self-sufficient in corresponding with one so far my superior in understanding and an author." However, an interview took place between

them before she left town at her lodgings in New Bond Street, and their correspondence continued for some ten years later until it was interrupted by Richardson's death.

Though Johnson knew him to be a weak, vain man, he also was aware that he was kindly and charitable, for which he desired to cultivate his friendship. But as Richardson cared little for the society of men, who were never so appreciative of genius as women, he received Johnson's constant visits with coldness; yet, as Johnson said, "I was determined to persist until I had gained my point, because I knew very well that when I had once overcome his reluctance and shyness of humour, our intimacy would contribute much to the happiness of both." Thinking that his new friends—Joshua Reynolds and his sister—would find Richardson interesting and agreeable, he introduced them to the novelist, but not before he had told them that if they wished to see him in good humour, they must "expatiate on the excellences of his 'Clarissa,'" and warned them not to show any appreciation of Henry Fielding or his pomps and works.

The reason was this. The exaggerated esteem in which "Pamela" was held by scores of sentimental women, their absurd rhapsodies over its author, and its sedate acceptance by this smug little man wrapt in complacent respectability, precise, posing as an interesting invalid and a supreme moralist, as he sat at his

tea-table in Salisbury Court, or in the centre of a superfine circle of adoring women in the secluded gardens of his Hammersmith home, could not but excite the malicious merriment of the wicked, the ridicule of all gifted with humour. The impatience of the latter with the foolishness of the worshippers was all the greater because the weak part of Pamela was generally overlooked, namely, that it was plain she had preserved her virtue that she might secure her fortune; and that when unable to gain her on any other terms than her own, her persecutor asks her to be his wife, she professes to love as her future husband one whom a person of her high principles should have scorned as a profligate.

There were those outside Richardson's circle who saw the blemish of his book and the absurdity of the adulation paid him. One of them wrote and brought out, within a few months of the publication of "Pamela," a little volume of letters called "An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews; Necessary to be had in all Families," which was written in the style of Richardson, and broadly ridiculed his novel. If Henry Fielding was not the anonymous author of this book, it probably gave him the idea of writing a parody on "Pamela," in which her brother, Joseph Andrews, a footman in the service of a lady of quality, is subjected by her to the same temptations as Pamela suffered from her persecutor, and who like her eventually triumphs

by reforming the instrument of temptation, making her his legal wife, and therefore securing for himself fortune and position.

This burlesque of a famous novel was written by one of the most remarkable literary men of the age. His mother dying while he was young, and his father —a general in the army, descended from the Earls of Desmond and Denbigh—marrying for a second time, Henry Fielding, after spending some years at Eton and at the university of Leyden, was for want of means to finish his education or to secure him a profession, thrown on London to earn his living. It was true that his father, always extravagant, and now with the claims of a growing family upon him, promised to allow his eldest son two hundred a year; but as the latter said, "anybody might pay it who would"; as nobody did, he was obliged to choose between being a hackney coachman and a hackney writer. Probably because the former required more capital to start with he selected the latter, and believing the playhouse offered the best market for his talents and the quickest means of securing him the necessities of life, he began to write comedies that found ready acceptance from managers and some success from the public.

Henry Fielding, who in beginning his career in London had not reached his twentieth year, had many qualities that fitted him for the battle before him—

physical vigour, a manner that charmed, high spirits and bright hopes, a sense of humour and the ability of conveying it to his hearers or his readers. Such gifts, as well as his striking appearance—for he was over six feet high, well built, with strongly marked handsome features, and eyes sparkling with intelligence—made him heartily welcomed among players and writers, whose mode of life he shared, spending pleasant hours in the green-rooms of theatres; in coffee-houses where news was related and stories capped; in taverns where play was high and men drank deep; in the company of gay women; occasionally hiding from the bailiffs in a garret, or becoming acquainted with the confines of a sponging-house; one day dressed in velvet and fine linen, and the next not knowing where or when a meal would be forthcoming. Witty and high-spirited through all, he chased pleasure with the ardour and recklessness of youth, and wrote without much thought that he might secure the means to continue his course; it being no unusual thing for him to produce between the late hour at which he left a tavern and the early hours of the next morning, a scene or an act of a play, penned "upon the papers in which he had wrapped the tobacco in which he so much delighted."

At the age of seven-and-twenty he married, retired to the country, and lived as a squire; but having no training or capacity for such a life, and for ever

craving for the excitement he had tasted as a dramatist, he foolishly squandered his wife's fortune in profuse hospitalities and extravagant displays, so that soon he was obliged to return to town and to his former calling as a playwright, to which he now added that of manager of the Haymarket Theatre, the lessee of which was in search of a tenant, and in the confused and disastrous state of the theatrical world at that time, quite willing to find one who if he had no money certainly had clever brains. As expeditiously as possible Fielding brought together a scratch set of players which, to attract attention, he termed The Great Mogul's Company of Comedians, and introduced them to the town in a piece specially written for them called "Pasquin, a Dramatic Satire on the Times; Being the Rehearsal of two Plays, viz. a Comedy called The Election, and a Tragedy called The Life and Death of Common Sense."

The object of those pieces was to satirize in a humorous manner the wholesale bribery by which political elections were secured, and the gross corruption of which may be imagined when it is stated that at the election of the Parliament then sitting Sir Robert Walpole had spent sixty thousand pounds out of his private fortune. These plays found such favour with the town, that on their popularity being exhausted Fielding wrote and produced "The Historical Register," that handled in a manner still more

bold, political and other subjects that were fair game for satire, and in which Sir Robert Walpole was introduced on the stage as a fiddler who could make the noblest and noisiest politician dance to whatever tune he wished to play ; while a famous auctioneer named Cock was also brought upon the boards under the name of Hen, who put up for sale "a most curious remnant of political honesty," and "a very clear conscience which has been worn by a judge and a bishop."

Satire treading so close upon truth was not to be borne by the Ministry, and Sir Robert Walpole determined to stop such scandalous representations. Though in the reign of Queen Anne a censor of plays had been appointed whose office was merged in that of the Lord Chamberlain, yet its function, seldom exercised, had in the reign of George II so fallen into disuse that it was not necessary a play should be licensed before being produced, or that permission should be obtained before a theatre was opened. To remedy this and to ensure the inspection of plays by the Lord Chamberlain before they were put upon the stage, an Act was introduced in the House of Commons on 20 May, 1737, curiously described as "An Act for reducing the laws relating to Rogues, Vagabonds, sturdy Beggars and Vagrants, into one Act of Parliament ; and for the more effectual punishing such Rogues, Vagabonds, sturdy Beggars and

Vagrants, and sending them whither they ought to be sent, as relates to Common Players of Interludes."

This proposed interference with the drama by the licenser was stoutly objected to in the Lower and Upper Houses, in the latter especially by the polite Lord Chesterfield, who in his speech said wit was in itself a property. "It is, my lords, the property of those who have it, and too often the only property they have to depend on. It is indeed but a precarious dependence. Thank God we, my lords, have a dependence of another kind; we have a much less precarious support, and therefore cannot feel the inconveniences of the Bill now before us; but it is our duty to encourage and protect wit, whosoever's property it may be. I must own I cannot easily agree to the laying of a tax upon wit, but by this Bill it is to be heavily taxed—it is to be excised—for if this Bill passes, it cannot be retailed in a proper way without a permit, and the Lord Chamberlain is to have the honour of being chief gauger, supervisor, commissioner, judge, and jury." In spite of his pleading the Bill passed. The Great Mogul's Company of Comedians was disbanded, and Fielding's management of the Haymarket Theatre came to an end, leaving him not a penny richer than when it was begun, for all the expenditure of his talents, time, and labour.

He next entered himself as a student of law at the Middle Temple and was called to the Bar on 20 June,

1740; but while reading for his profession, or travelling the Western Circuit, he had been obliged to support himself and his family by his pen, and therefore wrote political squibs, social satires, and essays for "The Champion," a periodical of which he became part proprietor and joint editor. It was at this time he made the acquaintance of young Davy Garrick, when the latter had not yet decided to become a player, but when to appease his love for the stage and to give his talents an outlet he had brought together a few amateurs and with them played Fielding's farce "The Mock Doctor, or The Dumb Lady Cured," in a room over St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, the performances having "suitable decorations and dresses invented for the occasion."

The acquaintance begun in this way led to frequent meetings between two men who had more things than genius in common, and to whose company a third congenial spirit, William Hogarth, was frequently added. At Fielding's rooms in Pump Court Temple, at Slaughter's Coffee-house in St. Martin's Lane, or at Hogarth's home in Leicester Fields they met continually to crack a bottle, to rail at quacks and humbugs, to exchange wit, and to frame satires. One can imagine how they roared over the early chapters read to two of them as soon as written by the third, of the parody of "Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded," in which the chaste footman blushingly repulses the

shameless advances of the lady of quality whom he eventually succeeds in converting into a virtuous wife. Notwithstanding the fun its author must have found in writing it, its chapters were produced at a time when he was sorely pressed for money. And no sooner was "The Adventures of Joseph Andrews and his friend Mr. Abraham Adams" finished, than Fielding who was anxious to rid himself of a debt of twenty pounds and to escape the threatened seizure of the bailiffs, took the manuscript to a publisher and offered its copyright for sale. The high hopes he entertained of getting the sum he needed were clouded as he watched the grim face of the man who casually looked over the pages and saw his brows contract as he flung them down. "Do you give me no hopes?" asked the anxious author; to which came a muttered answer: "Very faint ones indeed, sir, for I have scarcely any that the book would move." At that Fielding's expectations vanished and he said, "Money I must have, so pray give me some idea of what you can afford for it." Again declaring his belief that the book would not sell, the publisher named the sum of twenty-five pounds as the highest price he could give for it. "And will you give me that?" asked the author. "Why, I must think again," was the reply; "leave the sheets with me and I will make up my mind to-morrow." At that Fielding was obliged to be satisfied. "Remember," he

said as he went to the door, "for twenty-five pounds the book is yours," and trusting that such an offer might tempt this man of parchment face and iron soul, he turned away.

As luck would have it he met Thomson, the poet of the "Seasons," in the course of the day, and told him what had happened, on which Thomson advised him to get his manuscript back as soon as possible; but Fielding, with the expectations of immediately handling five-and-twenty pounds, made no haste to act on such advice. He was however spared further trouble in the matter by having his novel sent back to him in the morning—an occurrence that greatly depressed this needy author until he sought Thomson and told him of it, when the latter offered to introduce him to Andrew Millar, bookseller and publisher, "over against Catherine Street in the Strand," who though a Scotchman was liberal in his dealings with writers, and yet had managed to acquire a large fortune. The poet and the novelist then sought Andrew Millar in his shop, and though he declared he was not then publishing light literature, he promised that the manuscript should have his consideration.

Fortunately for Fielding it fell into the hands of Millar's wife, who was so diverted by the adventures of Joseph Andrews and by the skill with which other characters and incidents were introduced in the book, that she strongly advised her husband to buy it.

Accordingly in a few days honest Andrew invited its author and his friend to join him over a bottle of sack in a neighbouring tavern, there to discuss the sale of the novel. It was only when the second bottle was being drunk that Fielding found courage to meet his fate and ask what Millar would give for his manuscript. In reply the publisher said, "I am a man of few words, and fond of coming to the point; but I don't think I can afford to give more than two hundred pounds for it." At that Fielding laid down his glass in amazement. "Two hundred pounds," said he, "are you serious?" "I was never more so," replied Millar. "Then give me your hand and the book is yours," said Fielding, who was beside himself with delight; and in that way the bargain was struck to the satisfaction of both.

When published it became an immediate success. The greater part of the town seeing the broad humour of the parody, roared with laughter over the fun. A second and a third edition were soon exhausted. Its fame crossed to Ireland where it was pirated, and to France where it was translated and dramatized. To Richardson, smug in his superiority, conventional, worshipped by emotional women, an observer of all the proprieties dear to the prig, the irreverence to his own genius and the rough treatment of his beloved puppets seemed a horrible outrage. His sensibilities were shocked, his nerves were upset,

and his wrath was aroused. The only consolation he found came from the sympathy of his admirers, from his abuse of Fielding, and from the belief that the fame of "Joseph Andrews" was owing to a mere whim of public favour that would vanish as quickly as it had arisen.

In reply to a request from Lady Bradshaigh that he "would resume his elegant pen," he replies by referring to his malady, which "proceeds from repletion and too much application to business," by discussing the value of sea-baths, and continues by saying, "So long as the world will receive, Mr. Fielding will write. Have you ever seen a list of his performances? Nothing but a shorter life than I wish him can hinder him from writing himself out of date. The 'Pamela' which he abused taught him to write to please, though his manners are so different. Before his 'Joseph Andrews' (hints and names taken from that story, with a lewd and ungenerous engraftment), the poor man wrote without being read, except when his Pasquins, etc., roused party attention and the Legislature at the same time, according to that of Juvenal, which may thus be translated :—

> Wouldst thou be read, or wouldst thou bread ensure,
> Dare something worthy Newgate or the Tower.

In the former of which (removed from inns and alehouses) will some of his next scenes be laid, and perhaps not unsuccessfully; I hope not."

To other correspondents, among them Fielding's sisters, he also showed his severe displeasure with the author of "Joseph Andrews"; his candour, as he called his anger, obliging him to favour them with the opinion that had their brother "been born in a stable or been a runner at a sponging-house, one would have thought him a genius, and wished him a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company"; but as it was he felt "equally surprised at, and concerned for his continued lowness."

Fielding's success as a novelist did not induce him to follow it immediately by the production of a work of a similar kind; probably because he was still struggling with poverty which the ill-health of his wife and his own reckless improvidence had brought about, and that needed the more immediate relief which he could obtain by writing plays. For the production of one of these and the profits it brought him, he was indebted to his friend David Garrick, who on being engaged at the Drury Lane theatre, desired his manager, Fleetwood, to bespeak a play from Fielding. The desire of the young actor who was nightly filling his house and replenishing his coffers was promptly obeyed. At the time when he was asked for a play, Fielding was so overcome with care and worry as to be unable to settle his mind to composition, but taking from his desk an early unfinished comedy that had lain there for years, either

because its author thought it unworthy of his growing fame, or more likely because he had found no manager willing to produce it, he offered to finish and give it to Fleetwood.

The week he took to write the last act and revise the whole was one of darkness for this man of genius; for as he states in the preface to this play, "The Wedding Day," he was not only laid up with an attack of gout, but he had the misery "of seeing a favourite child dying in one bed, and his wife in a condition very little better on another, attended with other circumstances which served as a very proper decoration to such a scene." Hurriedly reconstructed and containing many blemishes, it was handed to the manager and put into rehearsal; Fielding's care for his reputation having to give place to "a much more solid and in my unhappy situation a much more urgent motive." "The Wedding Day" was produced on the 17th of February, 1743, but not all the advantage given it by the acting of David Garrick and Peg Woffington, by Mrs. Pritchard and Macklin, could prolong its run beyond six nights. The author's profits from the play brought him merely fifty pounds, a small sum to one of his extravagant and generous disposition.

To what extent that generosity and carelessness could reach, is illustrated by a story which states that on his being sorely pressed for money to pay his

rates, and save himself from a threatened confinement in a sponging-house, he went to friendly Andrew Millar and obtained from him twelve guineas on account of a book he was then writing. Hurrying back with this sum to dismiss an insolent tax collector, he met on his way an old college friend whom he had not seen for some years, and whose circumstances were even more desperate than his own; hearing which, Fielding, overcome by compassion, invited him into a tavern, called for a bottle of wine, and handed him the money he had just received from the bookseller. Then happy in having performed a deed that relieved a friend, he went home to hear that the tax collector had just left with the promise of returning in a short time. "Friendship has called for the money, let the collector call again" was the comment which he made.

Reckless in his expenditure, he was continually bantering David Garrick on his excessive parsimony, and on one occasion played him a practical joke relative to this trait which threatened to cool their friendship for a time. Soon after the production of "The Wedding Day," David asked Mrs. Cibber, Macklin, Peg Woffington, Fielding, and others to dine with him at his lodgings. It being then the custom for guests to tip the servants of their host, those who had dined with Garrick gave his man various sums in departing, Fielding slipping a coin folded in paper into his hands

as he quitted the house. When the company had left, the servant who was a Welshman, returned in high glee to his master who seeing his delight asked him how much he had got. "I can't tell you yet, sir," was the reply as he began to count, "but here's half a crown from Mrs. Cibber, God bless her, and here's a shilling from Mr. Macklin, and three from Mrs. Woffington, and here's something more than that from Mr. Fielding, God bless his merry heart too," he continued as he unfolded the paper to find it contained a penny. Garrick who felt nettled at this spoke to Fielding next day on the impropriety of jesting with a servant. "Jesting," said Fielding in apparent surprise, "so far from it I meant to do the fellow a real service; for had I given him half a crown or a shilling, I know you would have taken it from him, but by giving him only a penny he had a chance of calling it his own."

It was not until Fielding had published a collection of essays in three volumes called "Miscellanies," had lost his first wife and married a second, and had been appointed a Justice of the Peace for Middlesex and Westminster, that in February, 1749, he published his great novel, "The History of Tom Jones," in six volumes. This book, which notwithstanding its humour was written during years of continued hardship, was immediately successful, being read by all classes, generally lauded, translated into French, and

running into so many editions that its publisher Andrew Millar added another hundred pounds to the six he had already paid its author. Its popularity must have disappointed and vexed Richardson, who though he says he "would never allow himself to be prevailed upon" to read it, was yet able to give an opinion on "that spurious brat Tom Jones"; and whose feelings one can easily imagine on receiving a letter from Lady Bradshaigh in which she says :—

"As to Tom Jones, I am fatigued with the name, having lately fallen into the company of several young ladies who had each a Tom Jones in some part of the world, for so they call their favourites; and ladies, you know, are for ever talking of their favourites. Last post I received a letter from a lady who laments the loss of her Tom Jones; and from another who was happy in the company of her Tom Jones. In like manner the gentlemen have their Sophias. A few days ago in a circle of ladies and gentlemen who had their Tom Jones and their Sophias, a friend of mine told me he must show me his Sophia, the sweetest creature in the world, and immediately produced a Dutch mastiff puppy."

More bitter still to Richardson must have been the success of Fielding's third and last novel, "Amelia," for the copyright of which Andrew Millar gave the author a thousand pounds, an unprecedented sum in those days, and who in December, 1751, announces

it in the following manner in the "General Advertiser." "To satisfy the earnest demand of the publick, this work is now printing at four presses; but the proprietor notwithstanding, finds it impossible to get them bound in time without spoiling the beauty of the impression, and therefore will sell them sewed at half a guinea the set."

This novel, though inferior to "Tom Jones," received hearty praise from Johnson, who had previously made comparisons between the two famous authors of that day in favour of Richardson, his appreciation of whom was no doubt inspired by the fact that Richardson had rescued him from the bailiffs. As might be expected from a man of his weak nature Richardson was still unforgiving towards the man who had dared to parody his first novel. "You guess," he writes to one of his admirers, Mrs. Donnellan, "that I have not read 'Amelia.' Indeed, I have read but the first volume. I had intended to go through with it; but I found the characters and situations so wretchedly low and dirty, that I imagined I could not be interested for any one of them, and to read and not to care what became of the hero and heroine is a task that I thought I would leave to those who had more leisure than I am blessed with. . . . Tom Jones is Fielding himself hardened in some places, softened in others. His Lady Bellaston is an infamous woman of his former acquaintance;

Amelia even to her noselessness is his first wife. His brawls, his jars, his gaols, his spunging-houses, are all drawn from what he has seen and known. He has little or no invention, and admirably do I observe that by several strokes in his 'Amelia' he designed to be good but knew not how, and lost his genius, low humour, in the attempt."

CHAPTER IV

Laurence Sterne is ordained and gains patronage—Marries and gains an annuity—Writes the first volumes of "Tristram Shandy"—Which are refused by a London publisher—Brings them out at his own cost—Their immediate popularity—Their fame spreads to the Capital—Sterne visits London and is welcomed by Society—His engagements and popularity—He writes to his Darling Kitty—Nothing is talked of but "Tristram Shandy"—The opinions of Johnson and Goldsmith of its author—The protests of a Methodist preacher—A petition to the Archbishop of York—Sterne writes further volumes of his novel—Enthusiastic appreciation given them—His miserable end—A ghastly incident—The childhood of Oliver Goldsmith—An applicant for Holy Orders—His travels—His first years in London—Humble occupations—He makes the acquaintance of Samuel Richardson—Becomes a corrector for the press, an usher, and a hack-writer—Tobias George Smollett—His opinions of authorship—The success of his novels, "Roderick Random" and "Peregrine Pickle"—Goldsmith begins life again—Letter to his brother—Writing for bread—Bitter struggles—Compiling for the publishers—Makes the acquaintance of Samuel Johnson and Joshua Reynolds—The artist establishes a club—Its early members—Bennet Langton, Topham Beauclerk, and Edmund Burke.

AN author with whom Joshua Reynolds was also brought into touch was the Rev. Laurence Sterne, who for a brief while flamed into sudden notoriety in the literary and social circles of London life. Born in 1713, in Clonmel, County Tipperary, where his English father, an ensign, was stationed with his

regiment at the time, the boy was educated at Halifax, and afterwards, at the expense of his uncle, at Cambridge, where he became the close friend of John Hall Stevenson, whose chief conversation consisted of ribald jests, and whose great delight lay in reading obscene literature. Though his ardent temperament wholly unfitted Laurence Sterne for the Church, such a consideration was not allowed either by himself or by its authorities to stand between him and an easy means of gaining his livelihood; so that he was ordained a priest on the 20th of August, 1738, by the obliging Bishop of Chester, Samuel Peploe; and four days later through the influence of his uncle was collated by the Archbishop of York to the vicarage of Sutton-in-the-Forest, a village about eight miles from York. Within three years he was made a Prebendary of York Cathedral, also by the favour and interest of his uncle, who eventually cast him off and became, as Laurence Sterne said, his bitterest enemy.

At the age of thirty he married a girl of good family and above the average in intellect, who brought him an annuity of forty pounds a year, considered a fortune in her native Yorkshire, as well as a living at Stillington, which a friend had "made her a compliment of," and that adjoining Sutton, he was allowed to hold at the same time as his other preferments. To a man of his lively disposition and eager-

ness for variety, life in a primitive village would have been unendurable if he were not, as he candidly confesses, "always miserably in love with some one" besides his wife; for his obligations as a husband or his duty as a parson were never allowed to weigh upon his spirits or hinder his inclinations. His more reputable pastimes were hunting, shooting, farming, skating, fiddle-playing, reading, and painting. The manner in which he performed his offices as a clergyman may be imagined when it is told that one Sunday morning, as he was on his way to conduct a service, one of the dogs that usually accompanied him to the church sprung a covey of partridges, on which he hurried back to his house for a gun to enjoy the sport, utterly indifferent to the congregation awaiting his pious counsel. After this it will not be wondered at that on his falling into a lake on which he had been skating, his parishioners looked calmly on his struggles for life, unready if not unwilling to save him.

The sudden knowledge attended by unpleasant circumstances, of an intrigue he carried on under his own roof with his wife's maidservant flung that long-suffering woman into a fit of anger that unsettled her reason for many months, and obliged her to be placed in a private asylum at York. While she remained there he employed the time left him from other pursuits in writing his first novel, "Tristram Shandy." When the earlier volumes were finished he offered

them to Dodsley the bookseller for fifty pounds; but he, probably thinking their obscenity would not be compensated for by their wit, returned them to Sterne. The author's experience of mankind and his personal predilections leading him to believe that if only the novel were published it would gain immense popularity, he had a small edition printed at York in December, 1759. His opinion of human nature, especially of that sample contained in a cathedral town, was not mistaken, for he was soon able to write that his volumes "made a great noise, and had a prodigious run, for in two days after they came out the bookseller sold two hundred, and continued selling them very fast."

In a few weeks the fame of "Tristram Shandy" had reached London, when Dodsley agreed to give him four hundred and eighty pounds for an edition of the novel together with a book of sermons, this sample of pious literature depending for sale on the pruriency of the romance. The latter was eagerly and widely read; and to enjoy the fame it brought him, Sterne, leaving his wife now recovered, and his only child, a girl, in York, hurried to London and took lodgings in "Pell Mell at ye second house from St. Albans street."

His social success was assured from the first. Men of fashion and women of quality were impatient to welcome among themselves a clergyman so emancipated from the conventions of his calling as to write

a ribald story; and who likewise could entertain them conversationally with choice tales from Rabelais ever on the tip of his tongue, as well as anecdotes of his personal experiences not less wanting in decency. Accordingly carriages were drawn up all the morning in front of his door; his rooms were thronged with visitors; his days and nights were filled for weeks in advance with invitations to dinners and suppers, to assemblies, to parties at Ranelagh, and to boxes at the playhouses. Nor was this all. Bishop Warburton rewarded a writer who had so delightfully amused him by giving him a purse of guineas and by recommending his book "to all the best company in town," as Sterne relates; Lord Ossory commissioned Joshua Reynolds to paint the author's portrait, now in the possession of Lord Lansdowne; Lord Falconberg presented him with the living at Coxwold, valued at one hundred and sixty pounds a year, and "oppressed him to death with civility"; and Lord Rockingham carried him in his suite to Windsor that he might be present at an installation of Knights of the Garter, and afterwards at the banquet, "which had been contracted for to some general undertaker for fourteen hundred pounds, of which the King has bargained to pay one-third."

That the sensation he created was astonishing to himself may be gathered from his letters, printed by the Philobiblon Society, and addressed to Miss

Catherine de Fourmantle at Mrs. Joliff's, in Stone Gate, York; and on her following him to town, directed to Merds Court, St. Anne's, Soho—letters that leave little to the imagination regarding the relations that existed between them. To her, whom he addresses as his dear Kitty, his sweet lass, his dear enchanting slut, he writes in one of the earliest of them: "I have the greatest honours paid me and the most civilities shown me that ever were known from the great, and am engaged already to ten noblemen and men of fashion to dine. Mr. Garrick pays me all and more honour than I could look for. I dined with him to-day, and he has promised numbers of great people to carry me to dine with 'em. He has given me an order for the liberty of his boxes and of every part of his house for the whole season, and indeed leaves nothing undone that can do me service or credit; he has undertaken the management of the booksellers, and will procure me a great price. There is a fine print going to be done of me, so I shall make the most of myself and sell both inside and out. I take care of my health, but am hurried off my legs by going to great people."

A couple of weeks later and he tells his darling Kitty: "My lodging is every hour full of great people of the first rank, who strive who shall most honour me. Even all the bishops have sent their compliments to me, and I set out on Monday morning to pay my

visits to them all. I am to dine with Lord Chesterfield this week, and next Sunday Lord Rockingham takes me to Court. I have snatched this single moment, though there's company in my rooms, to tell my dear Kitty this, and that I am hers for ever and ever." Later still he writes that he has fourteen engagements in his books to dine with the first nobility; that the greatest men seek his society; and that "from morning to night my lodgings, which by the by are the genteelest in the town, are full of the greatest company. I dined these two days with two Ladies of the Bedchamber; then with Lord Rockingham, Lord Edgcumbe, Lord Winchelsea, Lord Lyttleton, a bishop, etc. I assure you Kitty that Tristram is the greatest fashion. . . . I have but one obstacle to my happiness now left, and what that is you know as well as I. . . . What is honey compared to the sweetness of thee, who are sweeter than all the flowers it comes from. I love you to distraction Kitty, and will love you to eternity."

That Sterne did not exaggerate the estimation in which his novel was held is borne out by Horace Walpole, who in writing to Sir David Dalrymple in April, 1760, tells him that "nothing is talked of, nothing admired," but "Tristram Shandy," which he cannot help calling a very insipid and tedious performance. "It makes one smile two or three times at the beginning," he continues, "but in recompense

makes one yawn for two hours. The characters are tolerably kept up, but the humour is for ever attempted and missed. The best thing in it is a sermon, oddly coupled with a good deal of bawdy. The man's head, indeed, was a little turned before and is now topsy-turvy with his success and fame. . . . Bishop Warburton gave him a purse of gold and this compliment (which happens to be a contradiction), 'that it was an original composition and in the true Cervantic vein.' Warburton, however, not content with this recommended the book to the bench of bishops, and told them Mr. Sterne the author was the English Rabelais. They had never heard of such an author."

There was another side to the laudation which Sterne received from the fashionable portion of society. He himself relates in his letters that one half the town abused his book as bitterly as the other half cried it up to the skies; a difference of opinion which he regarded as an excellent advertisement, for the best of it is, he says, that they who abused it bought it at a rate that sent it into a second edition. Among those who were offended by its gross innuendoes was Samuel Johnson, who always spoke with scorn of "the man Sterne"; a scorn that was justly increased when on meeting him for the first and only time, Sterne strove to divert the company by exhibiting an obscene drawing. That Joshua Reynolds shared his

friend's opinion of Sterne may be taken for granted, not only because he was a man of decent life and natural refinement, but because he has left us in his portrait of Sterne the man he saw; a man with leering eyes, mocking mouth, and sinister expression. Richardson spoke of him as "execrable," and Goldsmith referred to him as "a bawdy blockhead."

Not only that, but in a public letter written and published by a Methodist preacher regarding "Tristram Shandy," "a profane book penned by the devil himself, and calculated above all other books to advance the interests of the Prince of Darkness," its author was apostrophized as follows: "Oh Sterne thou art scabby, and such is the leprosy of thy mind that it cannot be cured like the leprosy of the body by dipping nine times in the River Jordan." Finally a petition was addressed to the Archbishop of York inviting his attention to the scandalous contrast between the indecent tone of Sterne's writings and his sacred calling; but the only notice taken by his Grace of this protest was that on Sterne's return to York, he had the honour of being invited to preach in the cathedral before the Judges of the Assizes, and that he was allowed to fill not only the perpetual curacy of Coxwold given him by the oppressively civil Lord Falconberg, but at the same time to retain the livings of Sutton and Stillington, which were henceforth served by curates whose

respective salaries were twelve and forty pounds a year.

The enthusiastic appreciation given to the first volumes of "Tristram Shandy" inspired its author to continue his novel in the same vein, and two more books were published in the beginning of 1761, with a plate by Hogarth. A fresh chorus of praise greeted them, and on Sterne coming to town to enjoy his success, he was again welcomed by society, and as an appropriate honour invited to preach at the Foundling Hospital. By this time his wife, "in pure sober good sense built on sound experience, declared herself happier in his absence and suggested he should cure his discontent by leading a bear round Europe"; but this did not meet his wishes. However, in January, 1762, having published a fifth volume of "Tristram Shandy" and obtained from his bishop a year's leave of absence, he set out for the Continent. Two years later he was abroad again, this time taking with him the sole obstacle to his happiness and their daughter. On his return to England his wife preferred to remain in France. In great good humour he therefore settled at Coxwold to write two more volumes of "Tristram Shandy," which were published in January, 1765; in the spring of which year he sought recreation at Bath, and while there was painted by Gainsborough, at a single sitting it is said. In the autumn he was once more abroad travelling through

France and Italy, some account of which is given in his "Sentimental Journey."

Within a few months of its publication in February, 1768, its author lay desperately ill of influenza in his lodgings at the Silk Bag shop, in Old Bond Street, alone save for hired servants. His wife and daughter who had arranged to separate from him were at York; his dear enchanting slut Kitty had gone back to her Huguenot relatives in France; her successor Mrs. Draper, his "child and darling," whose portrait he wore round his neck, was with her elderly uncongenial husband in India; and the women of fashion with whom he had intrigued, no longer found pleasure in the society of a sickly man. Some of his former male associates still retained sufficient interest in him to feel concerned about his health, and a number of these, the Duke of Roxburgh, the Earl of March, the Earl of Ossory, the Duke of Grafton, David Garrick, David Hume the historian, and Joshua Reynolds speaking of him one day while dining with John Crawford of Errol, he sent his trusty body-servant James Macdonald, to inquire how Mr. Sterne did. On his rapping at the street door of the author's lodgings it was opened by the mistress of the house, who bade him make his inquiries of the nurse. "I went," says he, "into the room, and he was just a-dying. I waited ten minutes; but in five he said, 'Now is it come.' He put up

his hand as if to stop a blow, and died in a minute."

On James Macdonald returning to his master with this news, the gentlemen who heard it declared themselves very sorry and lamented Sterne's loss; but their grief or their respect for him was not sufficient to induce them to follow his remains to St. George's burial ground in the Bayswater Road, the only person who attended him on his last journey being his publisher, who sincerely grieved that an untimely end should have come to one who had increased his income. It is said that he had scarcely breathed his last before the lodging-house servant tore the gold buttons from the coat he wore when dying; and it is certain that one of his fine friends, Lord Eglinton, made a joke about the author having set out on his sentimental journey. He left behind him debts to the amount of eleven hundred pounds (his assets being four hundred pounds) together with a number of compromising letters from women of rank and fashion. His poor remains were not allowed to rest in peace, for the loneliness of the graveyard, not far from Tyburn scaffold, inviting greedy body-snatchers, all that was left of him was unearthed two days after his burial and sold to Charles Collingnon, Professor of Anatomy at Cambridge, where at the instant when it was under the scapel, his ghastly face fixed in a sinister smile was recognized by a horrified student.

A man of letters, who while Sterne was enjoying the rewards of his indecencies, was struggling and starving in London, was the simple-hearted, cleanly-minded, kindly and generous Oliver Goldsmith, for whom above all other writers of his time Joshua Reynolds felt a warm and admiring affection. Born in 1728, he was five years the junior of the artist, and like him the son of a poor clergyman. The first sight to which his infant eyes became accustomed was that of the straggling street, thatched schoolhouse, and ivy-grown church of the village of Pallas, in the county of Longford, isolated from the world and sleeping contentedly in the peace of its surrounding fields; the first stories that filled his ears were those of the good people—elves, gnomes, and fairies who woke to activity at night while children slumbered, who crept through keyholes, warmed themselves by smouldering turf fires, rode upon the winds, cast spells on man and beast, and when they believed none watched, gamboled in the moonbeams and left traces of their merry dancing in hand-in-hand circles in the rings that marked specially favoured meadows.

Tales such as these, together with the bardic legends of brave knight and fair lady, of battle array and heroic valour, as sung by the blind and venerable Thurlough O'Carolan, when "with horse, harp, and goosoon" he travelled through the country and became the honoured guest of the gentry, fired the

imagination of little Oliver, and begot in him a desire to read, and later to write verses. Put to school to a clergyman who thought him "impenetrably stupid," he was later sent to Trinity College, Dublin, where though negligent in his attention to lectures, careless in general about his studies, unable to make any figure at mathematics, and the butt of his tyrannical tutor, he could turn an ode of Horace into better English than any of his fellow students.

Taking his degree of Bachelor of Arts, he returned to his mother, now a widow in reduced circumstances and living the evening of her quiet life in a little roadside cottage at Ballymahon; the old parsonage at Pallas together with its stipend of forty pounds a year, having passed into the possession of her eldest son, a parson. That Oliver should follow his example and seek ordination was the earnest wish of his family, to which, though longings to travel lay in his heart, and in his mind a poor opinion of the reward his ministrations would meet with, he would have acceded if he had not been rejected by his bishop, who is supposed to have been shocked that this applicant for holy orders should have presented himself before him in a pair of scarlet breeches. Years of his life were then wasted in lounging in the bay window of his mother's sitting-room while he played the flute to her impatient ears, in writing verses and in reading while he strolled along lonely roads and through

woods and fields, or in playing cards, singing, and telling stories at the village inn in company with neighbouring squireens. By turn he became a tutor, and a student of medicine at Edinburgh and at Leyden, which latter place he left without taking his degree and having at the time but a guinea in his purse, but in his head the romantic idea of travelling through Europe, that he might see its wondrous cities and strange people, and that he might experience the unexpected.

That he had neither money, recommendations from friends, nor a second shirt to his back when he set out on his journey, troubled him but little, for he possessed bodily strength, a sanguine mind elated at the prospect of adventure, and a flute always his companion, friend, and consoler, and now to become his breadwinner. He therefore tramped through Flanders, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, and France, playing his flute at nightfall in some village, where its merry tunes gained him a night's lodging and sufficient food for the next day; claiming the hospitality of monasteries; occasionally sleeping in barns; and at times entering the lists of disputants at universities, where he was entertained and permitted to attend their lectures.

Always restless, and frequently depressed by the fact that for years he had not seen the face of a single creature who cared a farthing whether he was dead or

alive, he now turned his face towards England, but not before he had taken his degree in medicine, and reached Dover on February 1st, 1756, a date when prosperous Joshua Reynolds was painting people of the first fashion. Still penniless, without definite purpose as to his future, ready to endure privations, humble and gentle, with the heart of a poet, the simplicity of a child, and with a gift of writing melodious English that was unrivalled, Goldsmith set out on a journey to London, that was to last some fifteen days, buffooning in a barn with strolling players that he might earn a meal, seeking in vain for employment from an apothecary, and eventually reaching the capital footsore, distressed, shabby, lonely because unknown to all, and timid in his fear of fortune's frown.

By night he herded with beggars in Axe Lane, while by day he offered his services to the apothecaries for whom he was willing to pound mortars, spread plasters, and run messages. After repeated refusals from them, he was at length given employment by a chemist named Jacobs, whose shop was at the corner of Monument Yard, on Fish Street Hill, his salary being three shillings a week, besides his lodgings and his dinner brought from a neighbouring cook-shop and served up between pewter plates. From this he rose to be a "physician in a humble way" at Bankside, Southwark, when attired in a

patched and threadbare velvet coat, a laced hat, and a scratch wig, all of which had served another master, he attended patients as poor as himself, and was frequently unwilling to take from them the miserable fees they proffered, though they might come between him and starvation.

One of these patients, a consumptive type-setter, who perceived the poverty of his medical attendant under the thin disguise of his proper pride, told him that his master, Mr. Samuel Richardson, the printer and the esteemed author of "Pamela," was a man of kindly heart, generously disposed to the distressed, who had more than once come to the relief of Mr. Samuel Johnson when he had been arrested for debt and was suffering sore distress; and suggested to Goldsmith that Richardson might likewise be of service to him. Upon that hint Oliver took himself to Salisbury Court. Now close upon his thirtieth year, penniless, friendless, and poorly clad, a failure in the world's opinion, his countenance plain but open and honest, his manner—as Miss Cornelia Knight mentions—"easy and natural, removed no less from vulgarity than affectation," he stood before the prosperous printer and over-lauded author and stammered out his application for work. To Richardson's credit he gave him employment as a reader and corrector to the press, and appreciating his merit and his gentle manner, invited him later on to his library, where he

had the honour of seeing and hearing many of the novelist's female worshippers, and of meeting the ingenious Dr. Young, whose poem "Night Thoughts" was considered a work of genius; and whom, speaking of his earlier days when literature was dependent on the encouragement of the great, he heard say, "that a dinner with his lordship had procured him invitations for the whole week following; and that an airing in his patron's chariot had supplied him with a citizen's coach on every future occasion; for who would not be proud to entertain a man who kept so much good company?"

It was probably the respect and admiration which he saw paid to Richardson and Young that prompted him, who had aleady penned a rough draft of his poem "The Traveller," to write a tragedy; but before this was completed he gained relief from his more pressing necessities by obtaining the post of usher to a school at Peckham kept by Doctor Milner, whose son had been a fellow-student at Edinburgh with Goldsmith, for whom he solicited this place. Though his position as usher was little better than that of a slave, yet he accepted it at a time when his only ambition was to live, to escape starvation. Doctor Milner was not only a schoolmaster, but a contributor to the "Monthly Review" started by Ralph Griffiths, bookseller at the sign of the Dunciad in Paternoster Row. While the latter was dining one day with

Doctor Milner and his family, he was struck by some acute remarks made by the poorly clad, uncouth usher, and on the meal being over he took him aside and asked, "could he furnish a few specimens of criticism?" This Goldsmith was willing to do, the result being that, hating the drudgery of his post as usher, and anxious to follow the bent of his genius and become a literary man, he accepted an agreement from Griffiths in April, 1757, to devote himself wholly to the "Monthy Review" in return for a small salary and his board and lodging.

At this time Griffiths, a close-fisted, tough-hearted man, who ground to the dust the unfortunate hack writers he employed, desired to secure the best talent at the lowest price procurable for his magazine, in opposition to which the "Critical Review" had just been started with Tobias George Smollett, the distinguished novelist, for its editor. Smollett, with whom Goldsmith was soon to become acquainted, had been apprenticed to an Edinburgh doctor, and on having served his time had gained the post of surgeon in the navy on a ship that took him to the West Indies. On returning to London he had settled as a surgeon in Downing Street, Whitehall, but his limited practice and his love of the society of pamphleteers and writers led him, who had always a taste for literature and who had in his early days written a tragedy, to pen political squibs and magazine articles.

It was not however until the success of Richardson and Fielding had stimulated him to greater efforts that he wrote his first novel, "Roderick Random," in 1748, which was generally lauded and read. That he regretted having spent his time in writing fiction rather than in attending his profession at a period when literature was wretchedly paid, and those who produced it generally despised, is evident from the words prefixed to one of his pamphlets, the "Regicide": "Had some of those who were pleased to call themselves my friends," he wrote, "been at any pains to deserve the character, and told me ingenuously what I had to expect in the capacity of an author when I first professed myself of that venerable fraternity, I should in all probability have spared myself the incredible labour and chagrin I have since undergone."

These sentiments were probably the result of afterthoughts, for elated by the success of "Roderick Random," he published, three years later, "Peregrine Pickle," in four volumes, and in 1753 brought out his third novel, "Ferdinand Count Fathom." The profits of these books had enabled him to move with the wife and daughter whom he worshipped, to Monmouth House in Chelsea, where it was his pleasure on summer afternoons when it was safe for them to journey so far from London, to entertain in his leafy garden the celebrities of the day, and also his "unfortunate brothers of the pen," for whom he

provided "beef, potatoes, pudding, port, punch, and Calvert's entire butt-beer," a glorious feast to many of them, looked forward to and counted on for days in advance. Open hospitality, ill health, and the fact that he had been robbed by footpads of his watch and purse in travelling in the stage coach between Chelsea and London, had embarrassed his circumstances, so that he gladly accepted the position as head of the "syndicate of gentlemen" who were to direct the fortunes of the "Critical Review." It may be added that to Smollett belongs the distinction of being the first author to publish a novel serially, and in the first English magazine ever published at sixpence; that being the price of the "British Magazine," through which ran his story "The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greares."

Knowing the grasping disposition and insolent behaviour of Griffiths and his wife, both of whom thought fit to alter and curtail the articles that appeared in their magazine, Smollett wrote of the one as an "illiterate bookseller," and of the other as "an antiquated Sappho pregnant with abuse begot by rancour under the canopy of ignorance." It was no wonder that Goldsmith could not tolerate for more than five months so wretched a couple, who suggested the subject of his articles and then manipulated them at their pleasure, and who not satisfied that he worked in their garret six hours a day regularly, and occa-

sionally double that time, repaid him with surly looks and words of dissatisfaction. On leaving their roof he began the world again at the age of thirty-one, somewhat worn by repeated disappointments, by want, humiliations, drudgery, study, and above all by anguish ; yet keeping in his breast so gentle, kindly, and unwarped a heart that he was ever ready in the evenings to gather round him the poor unkempt children of the court in which he had a miserable lodging, and play a merry tune on his flute for them that they might dance to its measure.

"You may easily imagine," he wrote to his brother, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, in December, 1757, just three months after parting with the Griffiths, "what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence ; and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many in such circumstances would have had recourse to the friar's cord or the suicide's halter. But with all my follies I had principle to resist the one and resolution to combat the other. I suppose you desire to know my present situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should blush, or which mankind could censure, I see no reason for making it a secret ; in short, by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us to the gates of the Muses

than poverty; but it were well if they only left us at the door. The mischief is they sometimes choose to give us their company at the entertainment; and want, instead of being gentleman-usher, often turns master of the ceremonies. Thus upon hearing I write, no doubt you imagine I starve; and the name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret. In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my friends. But whether I eat or starve, live in a first floor or four pair of stairs high, I still remember them with ardour, nay my very country comes in for a share of my affection."

Meantime while living in a garret "writing for bread and expecting to be dunned for a milk score" he translated for the booksellers, contributed criticisms to the magazines, and began his "Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe." With all his industry and sobriety misfortune continued to dog his steps; for an appointment as surgeon or physician in the East Indies, to which he looked forward as an escape from literature, was refused him at the last moment; the Court of Examiners at Surgeons' Hall declined to give him the poor post of surgeon's mate; and when to save himself from hunger he gave four volumes he had received for review from Griffiths, as security to a friend who relieved his wants (his only decent suit of clothes for which he was indebted to Griffiths having been pawned to release his landlord

from the bailiffs), the prosperous, grasping bookseller wrote to him with many insolent and contemptuous expressions to demand the instant return of books and clothes, or payment for them.

Stung to the heart as he was and loaded with misery, Goldsmith replied to his hard taskmaster with heroic dignity: "Sir," he said in his letter dated January, 1759, "I know of no misery but a gaol to which my own imprudences and your letter seem to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and by heavens request it as a favour, as a favour that may prevent somewhat more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being, with all that contempt which indigence brings with it, with all those strong passions which make contempt insupportable. What then has a gaol that is formidable, I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is to me true society. I tell you again and again I am now neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make; thus far at least I do not act the sharper, since unable to pay my debts one way I would willingly give some security another. No sir, had I been a sharper, had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances. I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it, my reflec-

tions are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain, that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. Your books I can assure you are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of a friend from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow some money; whatever becomes of my person you shall have them in a month."

Griffiths spared him the indignity of sending him to gaol, probably because he found it more profitable to give him work for which he paid him starvation wages, and from which he deducted the amount due to himself. Besides compiling a "Life of Voltaire" for Griffiths, he finished his "Enquiry," at the last pages of which he was at work when he received a visit from the Rev. Thomas Percy, chaplain to Lord Sussex, who found him "in a wretched, dirty room, in which there was but one chair; and when he from civility offered it to his visitant, himself was obliged to sit in the window." "The Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe" which was published without the author's name by Dodsley, on April 3rd, 1759, caused considerable attention, and led to his being engaged by a bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard to edit a threepenny magazine to be called "The Bee." Unfortunately this venture did not survive its eighth number, but so excellent were Goldsmith's contributions to its pages, that he was waited on in his lodgings

by Smollett, who desired him to join the staff of the "British Magazine," of which mention has already been made, and which he started on January 1st, 1760.

Another distinguished visitor whom he received at Wine Office Court, into which he had been enabled to move by his more prosperous circumstances, was the great Samuel Johnson, of whose writings he had already spoken with warm appreciation in his essays, and whom on being pointed out to him he had regarded as "one of the most reserved and even disagreeable figures I had seen," though he added, "as he approached his appearance improved, and when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived that in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most good-natured countenances that could be imagined." From Hogarth, who had a warm friendship for Goldsmith, and who painted a portrait of his landlady now known as Goldsmith's Hostess, which it is believed was intended to propitiate that wrathful and impatient person when her lodger had fallen into her debt, and when the artist had no other means of soothing her, he had already heard that "Sam Johnson's conversation is to the talk of other men like Titian's painting compared to Hudson's," which had made Goldsmith greatly desire to meet so distinguished a man. An introduction to him was brought about by their common friend, the Rev. Thomas Percy, a genteel, suave, and

insinuating parson, soon to blossom into a bishop, who delighted in the society of eminent men, and whose collection of ancient poems known as "Percy's Reliques," still entitle him to remembrance.

On Goldsmith learning that Johnson intended to wait on him, he immediately decided to celebrate the occasion by giving a supper in his own rooms. It was then arranged by Percy that he should call for Johnson on his way to this feast, and on doing so was surprised to find the latter, not wearing his uncombed wig, his rusty brown suit, with the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose, old shoes upon his feet as was his wont, but with a new suit of clothes, a wig nicely powdered, and everything about him utterly dissimilar to his usual habits and appearance, so that his visitor could not help inquiring the cause of the transformation. "Why, sir," answered Johnson, "I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example." Their meeting on this occasion, May 31st, 1761, was the beginning of a friendship loyal, helpful, and protecting on Johnson's side, which was repaid not alone with equal loyalty, but with affection, reverence, and gratitude by Goldsmith, to whom few had held out an encouraging hand, but whom many had treated with suspicion, ridicule, and harshness.

This friendship with Johnson led to his introduction to Joshua Reynolds, who always gracious and sympathetic, soon came to appreciate Goldsmith, seeing, no doubt, under his rough exterior his kindly and gentle character, and who later painted an admirable portrait of him, which he intended to keep for himself. From that time these three men met continually, now at Reynolds's hospitable table, occasionally at Johnson's chambers in the Inner Temple Lane, but more often in the shop of Tom Davies, a player who had enlisted under the management of Fielding during his brief tenancy of the Haymarket Theatre, and later under Garrick at Drury Lane. Having married a wife remarkable for the fact that "though upon the stage for many years she maintained an uniform decency of character," he had started a book-shop in Russell Street, Covent Garden. So lordly was his manner, so pompous his patronage of players, so learnedly did he criticize his authors, that it was jestingly said he had in quitting the stage stolen a copper diadem and worn it ever since. Entertaining in his conversation and amusing in his pomposity, writers, painters, actors, and occasionally men of fashion, met in the little parlour behind his shop or in the shop itself to hear him talk, or to discuss with him and each other the demerits of the latest play, to criticize the last novel of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, or Sterne; to hazard guesses as to the name of the

writer of some recent political pamphlet; to tell some amusing anecdote of Mrs. Baddeley's gallantry, Davy Garrick's parsimony, or the audacious wit of Samuel Foote.

That such meetings might be more select, less restrained, and held in more suitable surroundings, it occurred to Joshua Reynolds to establish a club where a few friends might meet regularly once a week to sup together and to enjoy each other's society. On this being suggested by him to Johnson, it was welcomed with delight by one who, as the painter told Boswell, preferred any company or any employment whatever to being alone, the great business of his life being to escape from himself. It was decided that the number of its members should be limited to nine, and that they should be men of such talents and so well known to each other that any two of them, if they should not happen to be joined by more, might be good company to each other. The place of meeting selected was the Turk's Head Tavern, in Gerrard Street, Soho, where they were to meet every Monday evening at seven o'clock to sup, all members being expected to attend, the chair to be taken by each in turn, and every one present to defray his own share of the reckoning.

That its members should be select seemed to Garrick an excellent reason why he should be one of them, and therefore on hearing of the formation of

the club from Reynolds, he said to him: "I like it. I think I shall be of you"—a saying that displeased Johnson when repeated to him. "He'll be of us," remarked the great man. "How does he know we will permit him? The first duke in England has no right to hold such language." And it was not until some ten years later that the famous actor was admitted a member of the club. Its first members were Johnson, Reynolds, and Goldsmith. To these was added Bennet Langton of Langton, a member of an old Lincolnshire family, who while yet a youth had been attracted by Johnson's "Rambler," and had come up to town chiefly that he might make the acquaintance of its author, whom from reading his works, he fancied, as Boswell relates, he should find "a decent, well-drest, in short a remarkably decorous philosopher; instead of which, down from his bedchamber about noon, came as newly risen, a huge uncouth figure, with a little dark wig which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loose about him." His conversation, however, delighted Bennet Langton, whose scholarship, gentle bearing, and mild countenance, as well as the fact that his family had obtained a grant of free-warren from Henry II, and that Cardinal Stephen Langton was one of its members, favourably impressed Johnson. Their acquaintance soon ripened to friendship, when gravely shaking his great head and making many strange motions, he would talk for

hours to Langton as the latter sat with one leg twisted round the other, as if fearing to occupy more space than was necessary, his long body leaning forward as if wanting strength to support his height, and his hands locked together over his knees.

On going to Trinity College, Oxford, Langton had made the acquaintance of Topham Beauclerk, a grandson of the first Duke of St. Albans, and therefore a great-grandson of Charles II, whom he resembled in his features, in his character, and in his power to fascinate. Though both had a love of learning and an exquisite polish of manner, their morals were of a different order, so that Johnson on visiting Langton at Oxford marvelled that his host should associate with one of such loose principles; but in a short time he himself was so swayed by the gay, witty, and dissipated Beauclerk, that he admitted him to his friendship and was the constant companion of these young men; hearing which, David Garrick said, "What a coalition. I shall have my old friend to bail out of the Round-house." Beauclerk's sprightly humour and brilliant conversation greatly diverted Johnson who was given to melancholy and grasped at all that, while not offending against faith or morals, lifted him from mental darkness. Nor was there any other man whom he allowed to take such liberties with him as Beauclerk, who on one occasion having spent a night at a tavern with Langton, violently rapped at three o'clock in the

morning at Johnson's door until he appeared in his shirt and wig, with a poker in hand ready for the ruffians whom he believed had come to attack him. "What, is it you dogs?" he said to his youthful friends who were more merry than wise, and who carried him off to have a frisk with the market people at Covent Garden, to have a bowl of Bishop at a tavern, and to have a row down the Thames as far as Billingsgate, where on Langton quitting them to keep an appointment with some young ladies, he was scolded by Johnson for "leaving his social friends to go and sit with a set of wretched un-idea'd girls."

Beauclerk not only boasted of his friendship with the philosopher, but on her visit to England was willing to introduce him to Madame de Boufflers, the mistress of the Prince de Conti, the author of a tragedy, a leader of society, and one who desired the acquaintance of all distinguished men. To gratify this Beauclerk took her to Johnson's chambers where she chatted volubly to him, and in true Gallic spirit expressed her profound admiration for his genius. On her visit being ended she and Beauclerk took their leave; but had not got so far as the Middle Temple Lane when they heard a voice like thunder rolling behind them, which came from their host who suddenly remembering that he ought to have done the honours of his residence to a lady of quality, and being now eager to show himself a man of gallantry,

hurried down the staircase in violent agitation. "He overtook us," Beauclerk used to relate, "before we reached the Temple Gate, and brushing in between me and Madame de Boufflers, seized her hand and conducted her to her coach. His dress was a rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes by way of slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. A considerable crowd of people gathered round, and were not a little struck by this singular appearance."

That so lively a spirit should be one of the club was Johnson's desire. Samuel Dyer, a learned and ingenious man; John Hawkins, an attorney who subsequently wrote a biography of Johnson; Bennet Langton; Doctor Nugent, a Catholic physician; and his son-in-law Edmund Burke, completed the number of the first members of this club, which on its formation in 1763 was given no name, but which years later came to be known as the Literary Club.

The last of those named, Edmund Burke, was one of the brightest, most entertaining of its members. The son of a Dublin attorney, he had been a fellow-student of Goldsmith in Trinity College, and in 1750 had crossed the Irish Sea that he might enter the Middle Temple and take his degrees as a barrister. But instead of spending laborious hours in reading law-books, his time was given to theatres, to coffee-

houses, and to debating clubs. Already acquainted with Goldsmith, he soon afterwards became known to Reynolds, Johnson, and Garrick, with all of whom he formed a warm friendship which was only ended by death. It was probably his association with Johnson and Goldsmith that inclined him to give up his original intention of becoming a lawyer and of devoting himself instead to literature—a decision that so enraged his father that the latter immediately suspended the allowance of a hundred a year which he had up to that time allowed him.

That he had not mistaken his vocation was proved when, in 1756, he published two books: "The Vindication of Natural Society" and "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful," which won him a distinguished place as a writer, and so pleased his father that he sent him a present of a hundred pounds. Later he was employed in writing for the booksellers, and in compiling the historical chapters of the "Annual Register," the first volume of which appeared in 1759. His tall figure, massive brow, grave eyes, and dignified air, made him conspicuous; while as to his conversation Johnson thought him extraordinary—"Such a man, that if you met him for the first time in the street, where you were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped aside to take shelter but for five minutes, he'd talk to you in such a manner that when

you parted you would say, 'This is an extraordinary man.'"

Yet at this time he was regarded as an Irish adventurer who had to talk his way in a world that was to furnish his means of living; and was refused the appointment of Consul at Madrid by Pitt, who in doing so kept in England the man who was to become his most bitter, most powerful opponent.

CHAPTER V

Sudden death of George II—The early days of George III—John Stuart, third Earl of Bute—Hannah Lightfoot and the Prince—The new Court and its courtiers—His late Majesty is laid at rest—The young King falls in love with Lady Sarah Lennox—The King's conversation with Lord Holland—The Princess Dowager is alarmed—A Consort is selected for His Majesty—Lady Sarah's letter about the royal marriage—Allan Ramsay is commissioned to paint the ceremony—Lord Bute's supremacy—Honours conferred on himself—He patronizes the Scotch, and is hated by the English—Allan Ramsay's merits as a painter—James Northcote's opinions of him—Reynolds paints some of Her Majesty's bridesmaids—The fate of Francis Russell, Marquis of Tavistock—The marriage of Lady Sarah Lennox—Her subsequent divorce—Her second marriage—Her distinguished sons—The elopement of Lady Susan Fox Strangeways—William O'Brien, the actor, forced to abandon a disgraceful profession—The young couple are sent to America—O'Brien's description of New York in 1764—They are permitted to return to England.

THREE years before the formation of the club an event had occurred which had an important bearing on the political, social, and artistic life of the country; for having lived for over seventy-seven years, for thirty-three of which he had reigned, George II died suddenly on Saturday morning, October 25th, 1760. On the following day his eldest grandson George Frederick William, was proclaimed King of

From a mezzotint, after the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE IN HER CORONATION ROBES.

p. 170.

Great Britain and Ireland, under the style and title of George III. The new sovereign then in his twenty-third year, had been heir to the throne since his thirteenth year, when in 1751, his father Frederick Prince of Wales, after a few days' illness had expired in the arms of his French dancing-master Desnoyers, and while a crowd of courtiers were noisily playing cards in an adjoining room.

From that time the young Prince—dull, quiet, and weak—had been dominated by his mother, a narrow-minded, ill-educated Princess, whose desire it was to keep him estranged from the nobility of his own age; for, as she said, "Such was the universal profligacy, such the character and conduct of the young people of distinction, that she was really afraid to have them near her children." In her endeavour to keep him apart from his kind, and under her own personal influence, she was assisted by John Stuart, third Earl of Bute, whose son and successor became the first marquis of that title. The Earl of Bute was a Scotchman with a poor estate and a handsome presence, haughty in manner, vain and pompous, and as much in love with himself as the Princess was generally believed to be. His passion for masquerades in which he could dress himself in becoming apparel, had originally recommended him to the frivolous Frederick Prince of Wales, who had appointed him one of his gentlemen of the bedchamber; while the

Princess had made him her friend and counsellor. According to that amusing gossip Horace Walpole, "Her simple husband had forced an air of intrigue even on his own wife. While he affected to retire into gloomy *ailées* with Lady Middlesex, he used to bid the Princess walk with Lord Bute. As soon as the Prince was dead, they walked more and more in honour of his memory."

Thoroughly and undisguisingly detesting her royal father-in-law, from whom she and her husband had met with many humiliations, she inspired her son with her own feelings towards his grandfather; so that when the King had desired to give him a separate establishment of his own which would take him from under the wing of his mother, the lad, inspired by her, had refused to accept it; as he had also under the same influence rejected the Princess of Wolfebüttel, the bride proffered him by His Majesty. But though he had no desire to make this lady his wife, he was willing that such an honour should be enjoyed by a handsome young Quakeress named Hannah Lightfoot, whom he had frequently seen in her uncle's shop in St. James's Market as he passed on his way to St. James's Palace, and had fallen in love with her. Dreading lest he might marry her at a time when the Royal Marriage Act had not been passed and the law was powerless to make his union illegal, Hannah Lightfoot was induced to go through a form of

marriage with Isaac Axford, "shopman to Barton the grocer on Ludgate Hill," the ceremony being performed on December 11th, 1753, by the Rev. Alexander Keith in his chapel, the books of which were removed in 1754 to St. George's Church, Hanover Square, where the writer has seen the entry of this marriage. At the chapel door the bride, who probably had never seen her bridegroom before, parted from him and disappeared from the circle of her relatives and friends, who not until a considerable time had passed during which they had advertised for her, were informed that "a retreat was provided for her in one of those large houses surrounded with a high wall and garden, and in the district of the Cat-and-Mutton Fields, on the east side of Hackney Road leading from Mile End Road, where she lived, and where she died."

The first of his line who had been born in England, and who spoke the English language without a foreign accent, young and unknown to the people, great expectations were entertained of one who, as Lord Chesterfield said, "was like a new Sultan dragged out of the seraglio by the Princess and Lord Bute and placed on the throne."

Excitement and interest were now on tiptoe through the town as to the new regime, and out of curiosity, loyalty, or desire for entertainment, all who could crowded to the young King's first drawing-

room, held on the Sunday following the old King's death, at St. James's Palace; a voluble, merry throng, wearing the outward semblance of woe as prescribed for them by the Lord Chamberlain, "black bombazine, plain muslin or long-lawn linen, with crape hoods and crape fans" for women; and for men black suits "without buttons on the sleeves and pockets, plain muslin or long-lawn cravats and wrappers, chamois shoes and gloves, crape hatbands, and black swords and buckles." Among them appeared the first Duke of Newcastle, Prime Minister under George II, a cunning old courtier, described by Chatham as "a very great liar," who was undecided whether to appear grieved for his late master or cheerful at the succession of the new sovereign whom he hoped would retain him in office; the Archbishop of Canterbury, a zealous sycophant who in his haste to gain the royal presence, trod on the foot of the gouty Duke of Cumberland, uncle to His Majesty, who said to him, "My lord, if your Grace is in such a hurry to make your court, that is the way"; and the Favourite, as Lord Bute was called, who pompous and theatrical, sent Horace Walpole into a panic lest in absent-mindedness he should address him as "Your Royal Highness."

In the royal drawing-room and the antechambers scandals were whispered, speculations made, and news exchanged under cover of the hum of voices and

the announcement by chamberlains of the names of peers and commoners. Among the flippant courtiers it was already known that the late king had left his three surviving children—the Duke of Cumberland, the Princess of Hesse, and the unmarried Princess Amelie, no more than thirty thousand pounds to be divided between them; though he had left his latest mistress Lady Yarmouth, a strong box containing ten thousand pounds. Great commiseration was expressed for the Princess Amelie, though it did not save her from witticisms at the expense of her character; for when George Selwyn was asked if she would now have a guard he replied, "Now and then one, I suppose"; and on Horace Walpole hearing that the Duke of Devonshire had lent her Burlington House, he declared he did not know why, "unless people supposed she was to succeed my Lady Burlington in everything."

While they told ill-natured stories, laughed, and gossiped, the young Sovereign, tall, with a florid complexion, prominent blue eyes, graceful and amiable to all, received the homage of his subjects as he sat upon the throne, showing no resentment to the favourites of the late King and the enemies of his mother, but at most treating them with coldness; and on the ceremony of hand-kissing being ended, mixing with the crowd, so that as Horace Walpole writes, "this Sovereign don't stand in one spot with his eyes fixed

royally on the ground and dropping bits of German news, but walks about and speaks to everybody." Behaving from the first with great dignity and propriety, he dismissed his own guards that they might attend the body of his grandfather, to whom though he had not been on friendly terms with him in life, he now paid all possible respect.

The funeral of his late Majesty was therefore conducted with pomp and splendour. On Monday, November 10th (1760), the remains were taken from Kensington Palace through the Green Park and the Horse Guards to the Prince's Chamber near the House of Lords, where it lay in state until the following morning in a room hung with purple velvet and lit with silver lamps; when they were carried through Old Palace Yard to Westminster Abbey, attended by an imposing procession which passed through lines of foot-guards, every seventh man holding a torch, their officers on horseback with drawn sabres and crape sashes, muffled drums rolling, bells tolling, minute guns firing. At the entrance to the Abbey the remains were received by the Dean and Chapter in copes of black velvet attended by the choir, all carrying wax candles and singing dolefully as they proceeded to the royal vault in the Chapel of Henry the Seventh; they being followed by almsmen bearing torches whose glare caused the long aisles, the fretted roof, the massive columns, and the white

motionless figures standing beside their tombs alternately to glow in crimson light, or mysteriously, indistinctly, to become merged in shadow and darkness. "There wanted nothing but incense and little chapels here and there with priests saying Mass for the repose of the defunct," writes Horace Walpole who "as a Rag of quality" walked in the long procession of peers and courtiers, "yet one could not complain of its not being Catholic enough. When we came to the chapel of Henry the Seventh all solemnity and decorum ceased; no order was observed, people sat or stood where they could or would; the yeomen of the guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the Bishop read sadly and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter, Man that is born of a woman, was chanted not read; and the anthem besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault into which in all probability he must himself soon descend;

think how unpleasant a situation. He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance.

"This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the Archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle; but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault where the coffin lay attended by mourners with lights." If Horace Walpole knew of the fact he refrained from mentioning it in his correspondence, that George II had left directions that one side of his own wooden coffin and one side of that of his wife's, to whom he had been so unfaithful, should be left open and placed side by side so that their dust might mingle; a direction which was carried out, for on the royal vault being opened in 1837 in the presence of Dean Milman, a side of each was found to have been removed.

No sooner had his late Majesty been laid at rest than all memory of him seemed forgotten in the

rounds of gaiety given in honour of the new King by his subjects, in which not only he but his brothers the Duke of York and the Duke of Gloucester, joined right merrily. At these, as elsewhere, the chief subject of conversation was the marriage of the young monarch. Had his choice been allowed him, there is little doubt but that he would have selected as his Consort a descendant, though in a left-handed way, of his kindred the Stuarts. This was Lady Sarah Lennox, fourth daughter of Charles, second Duke of Richmond, and great-granddaughter of Charles II, a young girl then in the perfection of her beauty as it blossomed into womanhood, and the fairest ornament of his Court. The attraction which the young monarch felt for her was visible to all, for no sooner had she entered the royal drawing-room than his eyes sought hers, his lips smiled at her, and low-toned words were whispered by him as she passed before the throne. Flattered and pleased by her conquest, Lady Sarah took all the opportunities possible to her to strengthen his love, for she not only attended the Court ceremonies at St. James's Palace, but in summer time played at haymaking in the meadows of Holland House, the residence of her brother-in-law Henry Fox, when the King was sure to pass that way on his customary ride.

The seriousness of his intention to make Lady Sarah his queen, may be judged from the record of

a conversation between him and Lady Sarah's friend, Lady Susan Strangways, which is preserved in the Holland House manuscripts. In talking to Lady Susan, His Majesty asked if she would not like to see a coronation, and on her replying that she would he said, "Won't it be a much finer sight when there is a queen?" To which she replied, "To be sure, sir." Then he remarked, "I have had a great many applications from abroad, but I don't like them. I have had none at home. I should like that much better." To this no answer was made by Lady Susan who was somewhat nervous at his remarks; but he breaking the silence said, "What do you think of your friend? You know who I mean. Don't you think her the fittest?" "Think, sir?" replied Lady Susan. "Yes," said His Majesty, "I think none so fit." At that he turned away and crossing the room went to Lady Sarah and bade her ask her friend what he had just been saying, adding that she was to be sure to make Lady Susan tell her all which she promised to do. On the next Sunday when Lady Sarah went to Court, the King immediately went up to her and asked if she had seen Lady Susan lately, and if she had told her what he had said. To this she merely answered yes; and on his inquiring, "Do you approve?" made no reply save to look as cross as she could, whereon he left her in confusion and quitted the drawing-room.

In another page of the Holland House Manuscripts is a letter dated April 14th, 1761, from the Right Hon. Henry Fox, who two years later was to become the first Lord Holland. This communication which is addressed to his wife Lady Georgiana Caroline Lennox—eldest daughter of the second Duke of Richmond—who had married him without the knowledge of her family at the house of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and who was a sister of Lady Sarah, describes a conversation which the writer had with His Majesty who after addressing "a loose question or two" to him, inquired where his wife Lady Caroline was, and was answered that she was then in Somersetshire with Lady Sarah. "At that name," writes Henry Fox, "his voice and countenance, gentle and gracious already, softened, and he coloured a little." On his declaring he was glad to hear she was so well, he was told that she was as well as anybody could be who had met with such an accident as she had while riding. At that the King "drew up his breath, wreath'd himself, and made a countenance of one feeling pain himself." "Was she going down a steep hill when the horse fell?" His Majesty asked, and was told, "I believe not, sir; the horse put his foot upon a stone which broke, and it was impossible he should not fall. Lady Sarah I hear proposes to ride to London upon the same horse to clear the horse from all blame." The King said

that such an intention showed a good spirit, but he hoped her family would have prudence enough to prevent it. He was told that her sister would strive to dissuade her, for that Lady Sarah had suffered much, as when the horse had attempted to rise he had pressed her leg upon the stones of which the road was full, and had broken it. "Then came the same countenance and expressions of uneasiness, which I rather increased by talking again of the pain the motion of the coach gave; and then relieved by assuring him that she had nothing hard to bear now but the confinement." His Majesty thought that would not be very easy to Lady Sarah. "And then," continues Henry Fox, "he left me for some conversation which neither gave him so much pain nor so much pleasure as mine had done. Don't tell Lady Sarah that I am sure he intends to marry her, for I am not sure of it. Whether Lady Sarah shall be told what I am sure of, I leave to the reader's judgment. I am sure that he loves her better than Lord Newbottle do's.

"I have shortened, not exaggerated, a word in this account, and I don't think it was invention made me imagine something particular whenever he pronounced especially the last Lady Sarah."

The young King's open admiration for Lady Sarah, whom Horace Walpole has described as being "a very young lady of the most blooming beauty, and

shining with the graces of unaffected, but animated nature," alarmed his mother and Lord Bute, who dreaded lest His Majesty should marry one who was not indebted to themselves for her elevation, and whom they could not govern; and who feared the political and social influence which Lady Sarah's family might gain were she made Queen Consort. Therefore in all possible speed the Princess and Lord Bute dispatched a Scotchman, Colonel Graeme, formerly a vehement supporter of the Stuarts but now a staunch adherent of those who could better reward him, to Germany in search of a princess whose qualifications need not include beauty or cleverness.

In his absence means were taken to prevent His Majesty's attentions to Lady Sarah and her reception of them; for Lady Bute was instructed to interrupt their conversation; the King's sister the Princess Augusta, laughed in Lady Sarah's face and strove to affront her; while the King was assured by his mother that the object of his choice was a bad young woman. In a brief time Colonel Graeme returned with a report that the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg seemed a suitable consort for the King, on which messengers were suddenly dispatched to summon all Privy Councillors to meet at St. James's Palace, at one o'clock, on July 8th. Believing that some urgent political business was to be discussed, the

Council was well attended; but surprise was felt when the King's marriage was broached with a princess of whose existence few of those present were aware till that hour.

As up to the very eve of the Council the King had carried on his courtship with Lady Sarah, who believed she was destined to share the throne with him, her disappointment must have been bitter. How she bore it is shown in a letter dated July 7th (1760), addressed to Lady Susan Strangways, and preserved in the Holland House Manuscripts. In this she says:—

"My dearest Susan,—To begin to astonish you as much as I was, I must tell you that the King is going to be married to a Princess of Mecklenburg, and that I am sure of it. There is a Council to-morrow on purpose. The orders for it are urgent and important business; does not your chollar rise at hearing this? But you think, I dare say, that I have been doing some terrible thing to deserve it, for you would not easily be brought to change so totally your opinion of any person, but I assure you I have not. I shall take care to show I am not mortified to anybody; but if it is true that one can vex anybody with a reserved, cold manner, he shall have it, I promise him. Now as to what I think about it myself, excepting this little revenge, I have almost forgiven him; luckily for me I did not love him, and only

liked, nor did the title weigh anything with me. So little at least, that my disappointment did not affect my spirits above one hour or two, I believe; I did not cry I assure you, which I believe you will, as I know you were more set upon it than I was. The thing I am most angry at is looking so like a fool, as I shall for having gone so often [to Court] for nothing; but I don't much care. If he was to change his mind again (which can't be though) and not give me a very good reason for his conduct, I would not have him—for he is so weak as to be governed by everybody; I shall have but a bad time of it.

"Now I charge you, dear Lady Sue, not to mention this to anybody but Lord and Lady Ilchester, and to desire them not to speak of it to any mortal, for it will be said we invent stories, and he will hate us all anyway—for one generally hates people that one is in the wrong with, and that know one has acted wrong, particularly if they speak of it—and it might do a great deal of harm to all the rest of the family and do me no good. So pray remember this, for a secret among many people is very bad, and I must tell it some. . . . We are to act a play and have a little ball. I wish you were here to enjoy them; but they are forwarded for Steve, and to show that we are not so melancholy quite."

The honour of marrying the Princess of Mecklenburg by proxy and of bringing her to England, fell to

Simeon, first Earl of Harcourt, formerly governor to the King when Prince of Wales, whose chief counsel to him had been, according to Horace Walpole, "Sir, pray hold up your head. Sir, for God's sake turn out your toes"; but who must have felt more interest in his pupil, as he resigned his post rather than acquiesce in the doctrines of absolutism that were being taught him by the Princess and Lord Bute, who from the first, imbued him with the idea that he must not merely govern, but reign.

After a sea voyage of ten days, Lord Harcourt and the Princess of Mecklenburg arrived at Harwich on the 6th of September, and two days later reached St. James's Palace in the afternoon. At ten o'clock that evening the Princess was led into the chapel by the King's brothers the Duke of York and the Duke of Gloucester, given away by the Duke of Cumberland, and married by Thomas Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, who according to Horace Walpole, "had been bred a Presbyterian and man midwife—which sect and profession he had dropped for a season while he was president of a very free-thinking club—had been converted by Bishop Talbot, whose relation he married, and had his faith settled in a prebend of Durham." The ceremony was magnificent, but the royal bride, pale, very lean, small, and plain, in her dress of white and silver, with an endless mantle of violet-coloured velvet that "dragged itself and almost the rest of her

clothes halfway down her waist," looked insignificant in comparison with Lady Sarah Lennox, who as one of her ten bridesmaids, carried her train. No doubt His Majesty was aware of this, and may have had his thoughts distracted by dreams of what might have been had strength of will been given him. Horace Walpole tells us that "during the wedding service on mention of Abraham and Sarah the King could not conceal his confusion," and that another cause of abashment occurred next day at the Drawing-room, when the Jacobite Lord Westmoreland, old and dim-sighted, mistook Lady Sarah for the Queen, and kneeled to and would have kissed her hand if she had not prevented him, on which a tittering crowd said he must have recognized a Pretender.

Though it might be thought that His Majesty would commission the first artist in England to paint the marriage ceremony and that of the coronation, yet no such command was given to Joshua Reynolds, nor was he requested to paint his sovereign. Reynolds, it is true, had painted his portrait as Prince of Wales, but that was before Allan Ramsay had left Scotland to settle in London. This artist was the son of Allan Ramsay the Scottish poet, best known for his pastoral of the "Gentle Shepherd," who began life as a wig-maker in Edinburgh, and subsequently became a book-seller and a personage of note among the literary men of his country. His son Allan in whom the hereditary

talent took a turn for drawing, had in 1733, when at the age of twenty, been sent to London that he might become a student of the academy in St. Martin's Lane. Here he remained two years, when returning to Edinburgh he set up as a portrait painter.

Seeing that he had much to learn in that art, he decided to study in Italy, and having made a leisurely journey through that country he settled in Rome, and studied at the French academy there. After an absence of three years he returned to Scotland where he again sought employment as a portrait painter. A longing for the land in which he had spent some happy years, and perhaps a perception of his own demerits, again induced him to visit Italy, where he remained until May, 1757. In writing from Rome in the following June, his countryman Andrew Lumesden says, "Ramsay left Rome about a month ago; I hear he is at Florence on his way to England. He may have acquired from great practice to paint a head, but surely he can neither paint a drapery nor draw a figure. He went sometimes to the academy here where he drew, but they were such figures as every one laughed at, and wondered how he could pretend to be a painter. In this article a dozen other British students might have been his master."

Allan Ramsay now hurried to England where he had heard that his countrymen were being greatly distinguished by the patronage of Lord Bute. Though

his favour to the Scotch had been necessarily restrained during the late reign, yet no sooner had George III come to the throne than it became plain to all that the greatest recommendation to emoluments, advancements, wealth, or pensions, which tradesmen, courtiers, soldiers, churchmen, artists, or politicians could possess, was to have been born in Scotland. This had been indiscreetly told his lordship by an Irishman who characteristically sacrificed profit to humour; for having at the risk of his life stopped the horses that had run away with His Majesty in Windsor Forest, the gallant man was referred by his grateful sovereign for reward to Lord Bute, by whom he was asked, "Well, what can I do for you?" when he replied, "Faith, the best thing your lordship can do for me is to make me a Scotchman"; on which his wrathful hearer turned on his heel and left the speaker to realize how wit may be wasted on those born north of the Tweed. And notwithstanding the King's frequent applications to the great man that he should find some position for the hero to whom he owed his life, the latter remained unrewarded for years, until at last when the Earl declared he could find no post for him, the King said he would make one, and kept his word.

When four years previous to the accession of George III the fascinated Princess of Wales desired that her favourite might be appointed Groom of the

Stole in her establishment, George II, who according to the Waldegrave Memoirs, "always spoke of him with the greatest contempt, refused to admit him into the closet to receive the badge of his office, but gave it to the Duke of Grafton, who slipped it into Bute's pocket." Those times had now passed, and with the new reign honours were freely bestowed on him ; for the young King had not been two days on the throne when his lordship—who by the way had produced the royal declaration to the Council which he had drawn up years before, and had kept by him—was sworn a member of the Privy Council, and a fortnight later was appointed Groom of the Stole to his Majesty and First Gentleman of the Bedchamber. And though as yet he held no seat in the Cabinet, he let it be seen that virtually he was Prime Minister of England ; for it was through him alone that His Majesty's instructions to his Ministers and his general intentions were made known.

Subsequently on March 25th, 1761, Lord Bute made himself Secretary of State for the northern division ; and caused himself to be appointed Ranger of Richmond Park in June, and Chancellor of Marischal College, Aberdeen, in August. Later he was elected a Scotch Representative Peer and his wife created a Baroness that her son might inherit an English peerage ; while he was made First Lord of the Treasury, 26 May, 1762, and on the following day in company with His

Majesty's brother Prince William, was made a Knight of the Garter. The Court was ruled by him with an iron rod, and so many of his relatives and dependents were to be found there, that it was jestingly said the Jacobites need no longer object to going where so many Stuarts were seen. Ruling the Princess Dowager who in turn ruled the King, the latter seemed to his subjects a shadowy person of less power than Lord Bute, a fact the young Queen had to learn; for His Majesty being unable to grant her request to make her brother, Prince Charles Lewis of Mecklenburg, then in England, a major-general, she asked Lord Bute for that favour, who waived her repeated petitions, and it was only when she applied to the Princess Dowager that he immediately granted it.

That the power and glory of my Lord Bute and the Princess Dowager might not be eclipsed by the presence of their Majesties, the latter were kept as secluded as possible, for which purpose Buckingham House in St. James's Park, afterwards rebuilt by George IV and called Buckingham Palace, was purchased for them at a cost of twenty-one thousand pounds, and they removed there; St. James's Palace "not seeming a prison strait enough," as we learn from the "Memoirs of the Reign of George III," by Horace Walpole who adds, "There the King and Queen lived in the strictest privacy, attended absolutely by none but menial servants; and never came to the

palace but for the hours of levees and drawing-rooms. The King's younger brothers were kept till they came of age in as rigid durance. Prince Henry, the third, a lively lad, being asked if he had been confined with the epidemic cold, replied, 'Confined, that I am, without any cold'; and soon after when the Garter was bestowed on Prince William and Lord Bute, Prince Henry referring to the Order of the Thistle, said, 'I suppose Mr. Mackenzie (a kinsman of Lord Bute) and I shall have the green ribands.'"

When Prince William (afterwards Duke of Gloucester) in order to escape from servitude, begged his governor, Edward Legrand, to solicit a command abroad for him from Lord Bute, "the haughty Earl treated Legrand with scurrilous language for putting such things into the Prince's head"; while the Duke of York, though greatly desiring the appointment of Lord High Admiral on the death of Lord Anson in June, 1762, did not dare to ask it of the favourite. He, though the eldest of His Majesty's brothers, was according to Horace Walpole, by far the most indiscreet of them, and "openly expressed his resentment and contempt of Lord Bute, and as a mark of disobedience went to a hunting party at the Duke of Richmond's, to which he had been invited with the Prince of Mecklenburg; but the latter was not suffered to go to a disaffected house in disaffected company."

As the favourite of the Princess Dowager, as one who came between the King and his subjects, but above all as a patron of the Scotch on whom honours, places, appointments, and pensions were bestowed to the exclusion of those whom an unkind fate had caused to be born in other parts of the kingdom, Lord Bute was the most hated, best-abused man in England. On his way to the Guildhall banquet in November, 1761, his carriage was mobbed by an angry, threatening crowd, while every offensive epithet possible was flung at him. Lampoons, caricatures, and ridicule in every shape poured on him daily from the press, and on his becoming Prime Minister, his house had to be guarded from attacks by the wrathful people, while he dared not venture abroad unattended. Nor was this all, for excited and dangerous mobs frequently swept through the streets in procession carrying aloft a jack boot (John Bute) and a petticoat, emblems of himself and the Princess Dowager, which were burned to the sounds of groans and to expressions of ribaldry, detestation, and threats.

It was in the hope of obtaining his patronage at a time when it had not reached its height, and within a few months of the death of George II, that Allan Ramsay had come to London. His expectations were not disappointed, for he was at once commissioned to paint a full-length portrait of the Prince of Wales and another of his lordship; while on the Prince

coming to the throne, Allan Ramsay was so favoured by the Court, and received so many commands to paint portraits of His Majesty who desired to present them to various Courts and embassies, that his studio is said to have resembled a manufactory where royal presentments were turned out by the dozen, the faces of many of which were painted by Ramsay, who left the robes, draperies, and accessories, and in some cases the whole pictures to be executed by his pupils. Either Andrew Lumesden's disparagement of his countryman—a thing as rare in the Scotch as it is common to the Irish—was the outcome of personal prejudice, or Ramsay made enormous strides in his art; for his portraits show a grace and individuality that give them distinction; and Northcote in speaking of them to Hazlitt, admits that though they were dry and timid, yet they contained "hints and sketches which show what he might have been if his hand had been equal to his conceptions"; adding, "I have seen a picture of his of the Queen soon after she was married, a profile and slightly done, but it was a paragon of elegance. She had a fan in her hand. Lord, how she held that fan. It was weak in execution and ordinary in features—all I can say of it is, that it was the farthest possible removed from everything like vulgarity. A professor might despise it, but in the mental part I have never seen anything of Vandyck's equal to it. I could have looked at it

for ever." By these commissions as well as by house decorating, for which his talents were far more suitable, he amassed in a few years some forty thousand pounds, a sum which in those times represented far more considerable value than in these.

But though Joshua Reynolds being merely an Englishman, received no command to paint their Majesties or the ceremonies of their marriage or coronation, yet five at least of those who figured in them sat to him. One of these was the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose portrait by Reynolds now hangs at Lambeth Palace, while a copy of it may be found in the National Portrait Gallery. A second was Lady Elizabeth Keppel, one of Her Majesty's bridesmaids, sixth daughter of the second Earl of Albemarle, and a sister of Commodore Keppel the painter's old friend and early patron. This picture representing her in her dress of white and silver as a bridesmaid, decorating a statue of Hymen with the flowers which are being handed to her by a negress, is perhaps one of the finest Reynolds ever painted. It is now one of the glories of Woburn Abbey. A melancholy interest is attached to it, for not long after it was finished Lady Elizabeth married in June, 1764, Francis Russell, Marquis of Tavistock, son and heir of the Duke of Bedford, whom Reynolds also painted, and lived with him as happily as might be until March, 1767, when while hunting at Dunstable he

fell with his horse, which in endeavouring to rise struck him repeatedly in the head, from the effects of which he died seven days later in the twenty-eighth year of his age. From this blow his wife never recovered, for she died eighteen months later at Lisbon, where she had been sent in the hope of benefiting her health.

Another royal bridesmaid whom he painted was the fair Lady Caroline Russell who married George, third Duke of Marlborough, another of Reynolds's sitters. More interesting still was the third of the royal bridesmaids who sat to him, Lady Sarah Lennox. A very lovely girl, she had offers from Lord Errol and other noblemen, but unambitious and impetuous, she selected as her husband Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, of Slanney Hall, county Chester, the sixth baronet of his name, to whom she was married in the chapel of Holland House on June 2nd, 1762. Sir Charles was a wit, a maccaroni, a sporting man well known on racecourses and famous as the winner of the first Derby, and one of the most dissipated men of the day. Finding that faithfulness to such a man was impossible, she returned the affection of her cousin Lord William Gordon, which led to her husband seeking for and obtaining a divorce from her by Act of Parliament, 14 May, 1776, after fourteen years of married life. At a time when divorces were not everyday occurrences, this action caused considerable

From a mezzotint by E. Fisher, after the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

LADY SARAH LENNOX, AFTERWARDS BUNBURY.

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scandal, but did not hinder Lady Sarah from being wooed and wed on 27 August, 1781, by Colonel the Hon. George Napier, by whom she became the mother of eight children, of whom the three eldest sons distinguished themselves as soldiers; viz. Sir Charles James Napier, sometime Commander-in-Chief in India and the hero of Scinde; Sir George Thomas Napier, K.C.B.; and Sir William Francis Napier, author of the "History of the Peninsular War," who lived until February, 1860. Lady Sarah survived her husband who died in 1807, when George III, mindful of old days, granted her an annuity of a thousand a year, which she continued to receive until 1826, when totally blind, her beauty gone, and the romance of her youth seeming as the incident of a dream, she died in her eighty-first year.

The fourth of the royal bridesmaids painted by Reynolds had a yet more romantic history. This was Lady Susan Fox-Strangways, niece of Henry Fox, first Lord Holland, and daughter of his elder brother Stephen Fox, who having married the only daughter and sole heiress of Thomas Strangways-Horner, of Mells Park, Somerset, added the name of Strangways to his own. In 1741 he was created a baron, and in 1756 was made first Earl of Ilchester. Though Lady Susan Fox-Strangways was comparatively plain, she was sprightly and witty, could boast of considerable

talent as an artist, and was an amateur actress of more than ordinary ability. At the various houses of her friends, especially at that of Sir Francis Delaval in Downing Street, who at this time delighted in theatrical performances, she met William O'Brien, the descendant of a good old Irish family, handsome, symmetrical in figure, elegant in his manner, as Goldsmith testifies, and well educated, who had become a professional actor, and as such surpassed all contemporary players in his representations of men of birth and fashion; and was considered according to one of them, Lee Lewis, "the only actor who seemed perfectly genteel upon the stage."

With him Lady Susan fell desperately in love, and determined she would wed no other man; but though her ardour was returned, yet she realized that her family would never permit her to marry an actor, which in those days was a synonym for a loose-living vagabond. The manner in which their courtship was discovered, and the result of that discovery, are related in a letter written by Horace Walpole to the Earl of Hertford, dated 12 April, 1764, in which he says:—

"You will have heard of the sad misfortune that has happened to Lord Ilchester by his daughter's marriage with O'Brien the actor. But perhaps you do not know the circumstances, and how much his grief must be aggravated by reflection on his own credulity and negligence. The affair has been in train for

eighteen months. The swain had learned to counterfeit Lady Sarah Bunbury's hand so well, that in the country Lord Ilchester has himself delivered several of O'Brien's letters to Lady Susan ; but it was not till about a week before the catastrophe that the family was apprised of the intrigue. Lord Cathcart went to Miss Reade's, the painteress. She said softly to him, 'My lord there is a couple in the next room that I am sure ought not to be together ; I wish your lordship would look in.' He did ; shut the door again, and went directly and informed Lord Ilchester.

"Lady Susan was examined, flung herself at her father's feet, confessed all, vowed to break off, but—what a but—desired to see the loved object and take a last leave. You will be amazed ; even this was granted. The parting scene happened the beginning of the week. On Friday she came of age, and on Saturday morning—instead of being under lock and key in the country—walked downstairs, took her footman, said she was going to breakfast with Lady Sarah, but would call at Miss Reade's ; in the street pretended to recollect a particular cap in which she was to be drawn, sent the footman back for it, whipped into a hackney chair, was married at Covent Garden church, and set out for Mr. O'Brien's villa at Dunstable."

In letters to other correspondents the sad calamity of Lady Susan's marriage to an actor, to which "a

footman would have been preferable," is dwelt on by this aristocrat whose grandfather was a timber merchant; and according to whom Lord Ilchester's grandfather was a footman, though said by others to have been a chorister boy in Salisbury Cathedral. The first demand of Lady Sarah's family was that her husband should at once and for ever give up his disgraceful profession; the second was that he and she should exile themselves in America, where their offensive presence could not humiliate her family. As an inducement to his banishment the young actor was offered a grant of forty thousand acres of woodland in the province of New York, for half of which he was subsequently offered thirty thousand pounds, this being obtained for him by Lady Susan's inconsolable uncle Lord Holland, from the King, who "has shown much compassion on this unhappy occasion," and accepted by O'Brien, who later on in May, 1768, was gazetted Provost-Master-General of the Islands of Bermuda.

But notwithstanding the possessions and position given him as a reward for his quitting England, he did not part from home and friends without regret. In a letter written by him from New York, dated 10 November, 1764, addressed to George Garrick, David's brother, and given in Mr. Forster's "Life of Oliver Goldsmith," William O'Brien begs that he will take the first opportunity to let him hear how every-

thing goes on at Drury Lane, where he often wished himself, just to take a peep through the curtain and have a frisk in the green-room. His passage, he says, was very remarkable, as it occupied only thirty-four days; "but between you and I, the tempest we have been used to see on dry land, before a crowded house, is far pleasanter than some we met with on the American coast. I assure you I thought it a serious affair, and began to say my short prayers. Lady Susan was vastly ill the whole way, but is now quite well again, and sends you her compliments. New York is not equal to London, but we shall be very comfortable, I make no doubt; every one here seems extremely disposed to make it as agreeable as possible to us. Everything appears just in the bud—a world in its infancy, which to folks used to the conveniences and luxuries of London is at first rather awkward. Time makes everything feel less so."

He continues by requesting that the "Public Advertisers" may be sent to him regularly by the packets, and if possible from the first day Parliament opens, "that I may see the progress of politics and plays at one view." Hearing from England, he adds, will be his greatest pleasure, and he begs that his correspondent may not forget him, "for east, west, north, or south, I am ever, dear George, yours most sincerely, William O'Brien."

Six years subsequent to the date of this letter, in 1770, after the death of Lady Susan's father, she and her husband were allowed to return to England, when O'Brien received the post of Receiver-General of the County of Dorset, which he continued to fill until a short time previous to his death in September, 1815, at the age of seventy-seven. Lady Susan survived him until August, 1827, when she died at the age of eighty-four.

From the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

LADY SARAH LENNOX, LADY SUSAN FOX, AND CHARLES JAMES FOX.

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CHAPTER VI

Early efforts to establish schools of art in England—Indifference to art shown by the English public—The contributions of artists to the Foundling Hospital lead to the first exhibition of pictures in London—Some of those who contributed to it—Formation of the Society of Artists—Pictures sent to it by Reynolds and Hogarth—Charging for admittance to a spectacle new to the kingdom—Johnson's explanation thought necessary—The Society of Artists is granted a royal charter—Jealousies and quarrels of its members—Deposition and resignation of its directors—Some account of Thomas Kirby, William Chambers, Michael George Mozer, and Edward Penny—Benjamin West, founder of the Royal Academy—Benjamin West receives his first lesson in painting from Cherokee Indians—His first paint-brush made from a cat's tail—He determines to become an artist—Permission granted him at a meeting of the Society of Friends—Painting portraits in Philadelphia and New York—Goes to Italy and is introduced to a Cardinal—Comes to England and exhibits—A favourite of fortune—The Archbishop of York becomes interested in him—Is commanded to appear before the King—Their Majesties examine his "Agrippina"—Receives his first commission from the King—Speaks to George III of the projected Academy—His Majesty favours the scheme—A memorial is presented to him—His interest in the new project—Reynolds is unwilling to join it—He becomes first President of the Royal Academy—Its first general meeting, first dinner, and first exhibition—Honorary appointments of Johnson and Goldsmith—Reynolds is knighted—The last days of William Hogarth.

EARLY in the reign of George III an attempt was made to establish a Royal Academy of Arts, the history of which forms not merely an important

chapter in the history of English art, but in the life of its first President, Joshua Reynolds.

Efforts of which brief mention must be made, had already been made to open schools for the instruction of artists in England, the first of them under a foreigner, Sir Godfrey Kneller, in 1711; the second dating from 1724 to 1734, under Hogarth's father-in-law Sir James Thornhill, at his house in the Piazza in Covent Garden; while the third, a life school, was opened in Greyhound Court, Arundel Street, and afterwards removed to Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, and subsequently to Pall Mall. In 1755 schemes for the better cultivation, improvement, and encouragement of painting, sculpture, and architecture were suggested by artists of the day, among whom were at least two foreigners, who in the circular they issued referred to the prodigious sums spent by English people on the Continent not only in buying pictures, but in obtaining permission to see them, and urged that encouragement should be accorded to English art and English artists; but as the public at large in this country had little knowledge of and less interest in pictures or sculpture, neither sympathy, support, nor serious consideration was given to this appeal.

As a result of this indifference to art, no public exhibition of pictures by English artists had been held previous to the year 1760; though a section of the fashionable world, patrons of the Foundling Hospital

and anonymous contributors to the ranks of its inmates, had been allowed by the governors of that charity to view the much talked of "Pharaoh's Daughter," presented to them by Hogarth; as well as the works of those who had followed his example and painted the walls of its new wing, finished in 1745, among whom were Thomas Hudson, Joshua Reynolds's master; Joseph Highmore, the friend of Samuel Richardson, the novelist; Francis Hayman, who contributed the "Finding of Moses"; Richard Wilson, the landscape painter, and others of minor importance.

As a collection of pictures by English artists was a novelty, it became the fashion with those desiring a reputation for taste to visit it; seeing which it occurred to the painters of such pictures to hold a public exhibition of their works, which they did for the first time on the 21st of April, 1760, in the Great Room of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, whose premises were then nearly opposite to Beaufort Buildings in the Strand, and that had been founded six years before by a private individual William Shipley; its chief object being "to bestow premiums on a certain number of boys or girls under the age of sixteen, who shall produce the best pieces of drawing, and show themselves most capable when properly examined." Later the age limit was withdrawn, so

that premiums were awarded to artists of mature age who excelled in sculpture, historical painting, and architectural design.

To this first exhibition Joshua Reynolds contributed four portraits; Richard Wilson three landscapes; Francis Hayman a study of David Garrick as Richard III; while the statue of Shakespeare executed for Garrick's villa at Hampton, and now in the hall of the British Museum, was contributed by its sculptor, Louis François Roubillac, a Frenchman who had settled in London and had supplied many of the portrait statues to the tombs of Westminster Abbey; viewing which on his return from Italy he said, "My own work looked to me meagre and starved as if made of nothing but tobacco pipes." The exhibition which lasted a fortnight, was crowded daily and was in every way considered a success; so that in the following spring it was intended to repeat the experiment. Before doing so many of the intending exhibitors requested that their works might not be shown at the same time as the exhibits of those who were candidates for the prizes of the Society, as confusion had resulted from the amalgamation; and also as great inconvenience had arisen from "inferior people crowding the exhibition room," they asked that the price of the catalogue should be a shilling, and that no person be allowed to enter without one, such catalogue to be regarded as a ticket of admission.

With these requests the managers of the Society of Arts, as it was called for brevity, would not comply, on which many of the younger artists refused to send their work to the Society of Arts in the Strand, hired the premises of an auctioneer in Spring Gardens, Charing Cross, where they hung their pictures, and styled themselves the Society of Artists of Great Britain. To this the two great artists of the day sent splendid specimens of their work; Joshua Reynolds contributing a whole-length portrait of Captain Orme with a horse, purchased for the National Gallery in 1862; a portrait of Lord Ligonier, Commander-in-Chief, also in the National Gallery; a whole-length portrait of the Duke of Beaufort; a three-quarter portrait of Lady Waldegrave in a turban; and his portrait of Laurence Sterne; while Hogarth was represented by his "Sigismunda," the "Gate of Calais," the "Lady's Last Stake," the "Election Entertainment," and three portraits; pictures which were certain to attract the town even in those days, and to ensure the success of the exhibition. The painters who remained in their old quarters, and who now called themselves the Free Society of Artists, continued their exhibitions at the same time as those who had broken away from them; but feeble from the beginning they eventually dispersed in 1775, while their rivals continued to prosper. As during the first exhibition of the Society of British Artists in Spring Gardens the purchase of

a sixpenny catalogue had served as a ticket of admission, by which whole groups of friends gained entrance, and as every member of the Society was at liberty to distribute as many tickets as he pleased, the receipts were naturally small; while according to James Northcote, "that which was intended only as a polite entertainment and rational amusement for the public, became a scene of tumult and disorder; and to such a height was the rage of visiting the exhibition carried, that when the members themselves had satisfied their own curiosity, the room was crowded during the hours allotted for the exhibition with menial servants and their acquaintance. This prostitution of the polite arts undoubtedly became extremely disagreeable to the professors themselves, who heard alike with indignation their works censured or approved by kitchen-maids and stable-boys."

Therefore at the opening of the third exhibition, in 1762, it was resolved to charge a shilling entrance and to give the catalogues free. But as it was feared that a charge for admission might be resented by the public, Johnson, probably at the suggestion of Reynolds, was asked to write a preface for the catalogue, "to explain their purpose and justify their conduct," as he stated. An exhibition of works of art being a spectacle new to the kingdom, he said, had raised various opinions and conjectures among those who were unacquainted with the practice of

foreign nations. The exhibitors were not rivals of each other, nor were they actuated by avarice or vanity, but by a desire to advance art. Whoever showed his works, naturally desired a multitude of spectators; but his desire defeated its own end when spectators assembled in such numbers as to obstruct one another. Every one cannot be judges or purchasers of art; yet experience proved that every one was anxious to see an exhibition. "When the terms of admission were low, the room was thronged by such multitudes as made access dangerous and frightened away those whose approbation was most desired. Yet because it is seldom believed that money is got but for the love of money, we shall tell the use which we intend to make of our expected profits." As many artists of ability were unable to sell their works for their proper price, an annual sale would be held, to which every artist might send them, the price of which would be secretly fixed by the committee and registered; if the pictures sold for more than the committee's valuation of them, the whole price would be given to the artist, but if for less the deficiency would be made up out of the profits of the exhibition.

In writing privately to a friend, the author of the preface having mentioned that Reynolds was without a rival, and continued to add thousands to thousands, which he deserved, goes on to say: "This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists and lovers of art.

Surely life, if it be not long is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of our time—of that time which can never return."

As it was hoped that the young King would have sufficient interest in art to grant it his patronage, the Society of Artists, whose success had increased each year, petitioned him to give them a charter, which he accordingly did on 26 January, 1765, incorporating them by the name of The Society of Artists of Great Britain; which Society was to consist of a president, vice-president, directors, and fellows, to be for ever after a body corporate with perpetual succession, and with power to enjoy lands in perpetuity, either by purchase or devise, to the yearly value of one thousand pounds. The first president of this society was not Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Gainsborough, or even Allan Ramsay, but George Lambert, a scene painter of Drury Lane Theatre, while its vice-president was Francis Hayman, an artist of mediocre merit.

Scarcely had the Society been incorporated by royal charter than its existence was threatened by petty jealousies and intrigues that developed into dissensions, bickerings, and eventually to open feuds, from which Joshua Reynolds, a lover of peace who extended goodwill to all, kept rigorously apart. As the original charter of the Society had been loosely framed, it had not limited the number to be admitted as members, as a result of which a crowd had flocked

in, many of them but artists in name, whose high opinion of themselves was only equalled by their low opinion of others. That men whom they considered of inferior ability to themselves should be directors of the Society, while they who were able to give it prestige, force, and character held no office, seemed to them ridiculous and needful of remedy.

Their numbers made them powerful, so that at a general meeting held on St. Luke's Day, 18 October, 1768, they had little difficulty in deposing sixteen out of the twenty-four directors. Those who replaced them showed a spirit towards the remaining eight which indicated that resignation would be their best policy. This resignation they sent in a joint letter dated 10 November, 1768, to the new president, John Joshua Kirby, in which they said that though their affection for the Society had determined them to keep possession of their directorships, yet "finding the majority of the present directors bent upon measures which we think repugnant to our charter, and tending to the destruction of the Society, we judge it no longer safe to keep possession of our employments."

Kirby, the president, an alert, restless little man of authoritative manner and insignificant appearance, now in his fifty-third year, had begun life as a coach and house painter at Ipswich, where at the village ale club he had met Gainsborough, who had resided there

for some time after his marriage. Becoming friendly with Gainsborough and admiring his work, Kirby attempted to paint landscapes, and having made a collection of sketches of churches, mansions, and castles in the surrounding districts, used them to illustrate a history he had written of the county of Suffolk. Acting on the advice of Gainsborough, he came to London and studied painting at the St. Martin's Lane Academy; then having been lucky enough to gain an introduction to Lord Bute, he was though not a Scotchman, appointed teacher of perspective to the Prince of Wales; and on the accession of the latter was made Clerk of the Works to Kew Palace. At His Majesty's expense and under his patronage, Kirby published in 1761 a volume on "The Perspective of Architecture," which was mainly responsible for his being elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. As one of his former instructors, the King showed a friendly interest in him which, as presently will be seen, Kirby greatly over-estimated.

Among the directors of the Society of Artists who sent in their resignation to him as its president, four played an important part in the foundation of the Royal Academy and as such must be specially mentioned. These were William Chambers, architect; George Michael Moser, a native of Switzerland, a chaser and enameller; Edward Penny, a portrait

painter; and Benjamin West, a painter of historical subjects.

William Chambers was born at Stockholm, where his grandfather was a merchant; but when two years old was taken to England, his father having a property at Ripon, in Yorkshire. As a lad of sixteen he was appointed supercargo to a ship belonging to the Swedish East India Company, in which he made a voyage to China, and was so struck by its buildings that he made several sketches of them. These were so successful as to lead him to the belief that he was intended for an architect, to become which he gave up his post as supercargo and studied in France and Italy. He was not quite twenty when he settled in London as an architect and began to execute commissions, one of the most important of which was that he received from Lord Bessborough to build a mansion at Roehampton, which afterwards became the home of Lady Caroline Lamb, and is now a Jesuit seminary. At a time when the influence of Lord Bute was all-powerful in making the fortunes of his countrymen, William Chambers considered it would not hinder his prospects if he declared his descent from the great Scotch family of Chambers. His timely remembrance of this connexion acted with the generous beneficence of a magic wand; for an introduction to Lord Bute followed, who in turn presented him to the Dowager Princess of Wales, who immediately employed him to

ornament the spacious grounds of her villa at Kew, now known as Kew Gardens.

For the next five years he was busy in erecting the pseudo-classic temples and Chinese pagodas, the climax of whose ugliness is reached in the great pagoda, and that even in his own days were described by the unappreciative as "unmeaning falballas of Turkish and Chinese chequerwork." The want of taste he displayed in these, together with his illiterate depreciation of Greek art in his "Treatise of Civil Architecture," quickly led to his advancement, for he was made Architect to the King and Queen, and Comptroller of His Majesty's Works—an office afterwards altered to that of Surveyor-General—and given an official residence at Hampton Court Palace.

George Michael Moser, on coming at an early age from Geneva to London, had been employed by a cabinet-maker in Soho to chase the brass ornaments for his furniture. From this Moser, an apt, talkative, ingenious little man, rose to become a skilled chaser and enameller of snuff-boxes, the backs of watches, bracelets, and other ornaments. His skill in such work was considered sufficient to secure his appointment as drawing-master to the Prince of Wales, who on his accession commissioned him to engrave his first great seal. Always interested in the art of his adopted country, he had been manager and trustee of the Academy of Art in Greyhound Court—posts he con-

tinued to hold in the Society of Artists, whose seal he had designed and executed.

Edward Penny, the son of a London surgeon and a pupil of Hudson, had studied in Rome. On his settling in England he became remarkable for the character which he imparted to the small whole-length figures he painted. A clever artist and an estimable man, he had won the appreciation of his colleagues and been elected one of the original directors of the Society of Artists.

But the most important of the four founders of the Royal Academy was Benjamin West, a descendant of an old Buckinghamshire family, springing from the Lords of Delawarre, a branch of which had sailed for America with William Penn in 1681. Benjamin was born in Springfield, Pennsylvania, 10 October, 1738, of parents belonging to the Society of Friends. The remarkable gift of the boy, inherited from no ancestor and not suggested by surroundings, showed itself at the age of seven, when although he had never seen a painting, engraving, or print, he drew in red and black ink a recognizable likeness of his baby-niece as she slept in her cradle. His first lessons in art were given him by some wandering Cherokee Indians to whom he exhibited his sketches of birds, when in return they showed him their rude paintings, explained how they were done, and presented him with some of the red and yellow colours they used. To these

his mother added a stick of indigo, when he was provided with the three primary colours. To use them with advantage he was told that he should have a paint-brush; but never having seen one, he did not know what it was until described to him, when he immediately set about making one from fur clipped from the tail of a cat.

Though he gave many proofs that he was born to be an artist—one of those whom he proudly assured his boy-friends were "companions for emperors and kings"—yet his father, looking on painting as a vain, frivolous occupation, and on pictures as instruments of distraction to the ungodly, desired him to become a business man. The boy's reluctance to this led his father to consult his neighbours and to call a meeting to consider Benjamin's vocation. At the end of the meeting when many prayers had been put up and discourses listened to, it was decided to allow him to follow his inclinations. The women present then gravely and decorously kissed him, while the men in turn placed a hand on the boy's head, "praying that the Lord might verify in his life the value of the gift which had induced them, in despite of their religious tenets, to allow him to cultivate the faculties of his genius."

In August, 1756, before he had reached his eighteenth birthday, he left the paternal home for good, his mother being dead, and went to Philadelphia,

where without instruction or experience he set up as a portrait painter, his charge being two guineas and a half for a head, and five guineas for a half-length. That he received commissions is not remarkable when it is remembered that at this time paintings of any description were scarce known in this city, and that probably the picture of St. Ignatius, taken from a Spanish ship and then in the possession of Governor Hamilton, was the only European painting in the whole State of Pennsylvania. This young West was allowed to copy, though he neither knew of or valued its merits, and it was not until years later that he discovered it to be an excellent work of the school of Murillo.

Having exhausted his commissions in Philadelphia, he went to New York where, says his biographer John Galt, the population "was formed of adventurers from all parts of Europe, who had come thither for the express purpose of making money, in order afterwards to appear with distinction at home." He however found many patrons among them, to one of whom William Kelly, a merchant, he was indebted for being able to fulfil the great desire of his life—to visit Italy. Sailing in a trading vessel he eventually reached Leghorn, whence he hurried to Rome; but scarce had he entered the capital than the wonderful news that an American and a Quaker had come to study art, spread abroad, when Thomas Robinson, then Member

of Parliament for Christchurch in Hampshire, and afterwards second Baron Grantham, felt such irresistible curiosity to see so remarkable a person that he hurried to West's hotel and pushed his way into the young man's presence before he had time to change his dress or sit down to his breakfast. If he expected to find a youth in war-paint and feathers he must have been disappointed to see a young man of tall stature, with fair complexion, blue eyes, wide forehead, and heavily moulded features, his manner grave, his diction quaint, and his dress that worn by the Society of Friends.

Though the singularity of his speech and his garments could not have compensated for the absence of paint and feathers, yet taken with his nationality they were sufficiently novel to create a sensation in Roman society, and to confer distinction on the man who would introduce him to its circles. Therefore Robinson insisted that West should accompany him that evening to a party given by one of his friends. A stranger in a strange city West agreed, and some hours later found himself the centre of a polite, if disappointed, crowd; while he was struck by the appearance of one of them, a man of distinguished mien, with a complexion of darkest olive, long white hair, and wide-open sightless eyes, who was dressed in scarlet and wore a sapphire ring which was kissed by those who addressed him. On inquir-

ing who this was, he was told it was Cardinal Albani, who was then forming his wonderful collection of classic art at his palace at the Porta Salara, and who having lost his sight had developed a sense of touch so delicate that his judgment of ancient coins and intaglios was accepted as the most reliable in all Rome. He was then taken to His Eminence and presented to him as the young American who had just arrived, when the Cardinal having greeted him, asked in his native tongue, "Is he black or white?" On being told that he was fair, he inquired in surprise, "What, as fair as I am?" When answered with a smile that the stranger was much fairer, the Cardinal was still more amazed, and could not satisfy himself that he had not some type of savage before him until with West's permission, he passed his fingers lightly over the young man's face and head.

Though those around had the advantage of sight, they could not persuade themselves that West was quite civilized, and all were anxious to witness for themselves the effect which the first sight of a statue would have upon him. They therefore begged he would permit them to show him some of the wonders of the Vatican galleries next morning, a request accepted by him as a polite attention. At the hour named he was astonished to see some thirty carriages drawn up outside his hotel, the owners of which with their friends had come to conduct him to the Vatican.

It had already been agreed among them that he should first be shown the Belvidere Apollo, which was then for its better preservation kept in a case. Having conducted West to the statue and placed him in a position where it could best be seen, a signal was given and the doors were thrown open. Then while every eye was fixed on him and every ear was strained to hear what he said, he exclaimed, "My God, how like it is to a young Mohawk warrior." When this remark was translated by Robinson to the impatient Italians, they were astonished and mortified to find this beautiful god compared to a savage, and were more inclined than before to regard him as one of that race; but when in explanation to Robinson's inquiries, he stated what splendid specimens of humanity the Mohawks were, the company around him were better satisfied. They must however have been disappointed when he showed no interest in the works of Raphael or Michael Angelo which they pointed out to him.

Having visited the chief cities in Italy, been made a member of the Academy of Arts of Florence, Bologna, and Parma, and been presented at the Court of the Prince of the latter state, when he astonished the courtiers by keep his head covered, he travelled through France and reached London in August, 1763, when he took rooms in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, and was presented to Joshua Reynolds, who showed him the utmost friendliness, and at whose

table he met Johnson, Garrick, Goldsmith, and Burke. On being introduced to the latter he started, believing he saw before him a Benedictine monk who had shown him some friendship at Parma. On learning this Burke told him the monk was his brother, who having become a Catholic and joined the Benedictine Order had settled in Italy.

As West believed that his talents found their highest scope in painting historical or classical pictures, he had no sooner settled in London than he set to work on his "Pylades and Orestes," which when finished created something of a sensation, such subjects being rarely depicted by English artists at this time. His house therefore soon became filled with visitors from all quarters to see it, while according to Northcote, those among the highest rank who were unable to call and satisfy their curiosity, desired to have it sent to them; they in returning it not failing to express their compliments and admiration. "But the most wonderful part of the story is," he adds, "that notwithstanding all this vast bustle and commendation bestowed upon this justly admired picture, by which Mr. West's servant gained upwards of thirty pounds for showing it, yet no one mortal ever asked the price of the work, or as much as offered to give him a commission to paint any other subject. Indeed there was one gentleman so highly delighted with the picture, and who spoke of it with such great praise to

his father, that the latter immediately asked him the reason he did not purchase, as he so much admired it; when he answered, 'What could I do with it if I had it? You would not surely have me hang up a modern picture in my house unless it was a portrait?'"

Early in 1764, West sent this picture to the Spring Gardens Exhibition, together with two others; one of which, "Cymon and Iphigenia," had been painted in Rome, and the other, "Angelica and Medora," in England. To these he added a portrait of General Monckton. For his pictures, several of which may be seen in the National Gallery, his biographer John Galt, with evident seriousness claims a place in the first rank of art. Moreover he makes the amazing statement that West's name "will be classed with those of Michael Angelo and Raphael," for "he was their equal in the fulness, the perspicuity, and the propriety of his compositions"; adding that "although his powers of conception were so superior—equal in their excellence to Michael Angelo's energy or Raphael's grandeur—still in the inferior departments of drawing and colouring he was one of the greatest artists of his age."

Such criticism is liable to make the judicious swear, for to-day his pictures are generally considered to possess neither beauty of colour nor design, neither originality of treatment nor spirit. Yet so uninstruc-

ted in art was the English public of his time, that the cold formality of his work, its want of freedom and inspiration, its commonplace mediocrity, and above all its shoddy sentimentality, was regarded with favour by the public, and with ardent admiration by himself, who—like many who lack greatness—throughout his life held an unfaltering and inordinate belief in his own heaven-born genius.

Always a favourite of fortune, he had the good luck to be introduced to many eminent men who were in a position to forward his interests, one of whom was Robert Hay Drummond, Archbishop of York, a portly man of stately presence, a classical scholar, convivial, cultured, and high bred, who before entering the Church had made the grand tour of Europe, which resulted in widening his views and in giving him a taste for art. The liberality of his sentiments is proved by the fact that when in 1753, Bishop Johnson of Gloucester and William Murray, afterwards Lord Mansfield, were charged before the Privy Council with the grave offence of drinking the health of James Stuart, Dr. Drummond boldly and ably defended them, so that the proposed inquiry into the matter was negatived in the House of Lords by a large majority and the accused acquitted. On the accession of George III, the Archbishop had the honour of being appointed to preach the coronation sermon, which he did in a manner "free from fulsome

panegyrick," a rare merit in those days. He was subsequently made Lord High Almoner to the King, when he corrected many abuses heretofore associated with that office.

His love of art led him to interest himself in Benjamin West, for whom he sought to raise by subscription three thousand pounds, that he might be free to devote himself to the painting of historical subjects, in which his Grace thought the artist excelled, to the exclusion of the more profitable portrait painting. When this scheme failed, the Archbishop gave West a commission to paint a subject described by Tacitus, of Agrippina landing with the ashes of Germanicus, which he read aloud to him after one of those excellent dinners with which he was accustomed to cheer his episcopal heart. Setting to work at once upon this picture, West soon finished it to the satisfaction and delight of the Archbishop, who desirous of doing the artist a good turn, took an opportunity of describing and praising it to the King, and of exciting His Majesty's curiosity until he decided to send for the picture and the painter.

This he did the same evening, his command being conveyed through his confidential servant Barnard, who on delivering it added that his royal master was "a young man of great simplicity and candour of disposition, sedate in his affections, and deeply impressed with the sanctity of principle; scrupulous in

forming private friendships, but when he had taken any attachment, not easily swayed from it without being convinced of the necessity and propriety of doing so." The next day West carried his picture to Buckingham House where he was graciously received by the King, who though the artist had soon after his arrival in England discarded the dress of the Society of Friends, must have seen something in his manner to remind him of the woman he had loved—Hannah Lightfoot.

He listened with interest to the replies West made to his many questions regarding the painting which, having no knowledge of art, and being of opinion that crude and plentiful colours constituted a good picture, he considered a work of genius. Then after a while he left the room that he might bring the Queen to see it, and to explain to her the subject of the canvas. Finally he turned to West and said to him there was another historical incident which had never been well painted, the departure of Regulus from Rome, adding, "Don't you think it would make a fine picture?" Though the painter was a Quaker he was also an excellent courtier, so that his instant reply was, "It was undoubtedly a magnificent subject." At that the King smiled and said, "Then you shall paint it for me," and in this way was given the commission for the first of the four hundred pictures that Benjamin West painted for His Majesty.

Of this number, it may here be mentioned, many represented sacred subjects intended for the Chapel Royal. Though it had occurred to the King "that the tolerant temper of the age was favourable to the introduction of pictures into churches," yet he had serious scruples about such an innovation, and before he sanctioned it asked the opinions of the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of Salisbury and Worcester, the Dean of Windsor, and other clerical dignitaries. To them, he said, that if they considered he as head of the Church of England was bound to prevent any such ornaments from being introduced into places of worship, or if they thought such an introduction savoured in any degree of a popish practice, he would not give it his sanction, no matter what his private belief might be. His grace and their lordships took a week to ponder this weighty matter, and then gave it as their opinion that to place pictures in churches would in no respect violate the laws or usages of the Church of England; and having examined the list of subjects submitted by Mr. West for such pictures declared "there was not one of them but which properly treated, even a Quaker might contemplate with edification." At this latter remark the King smiled and said, "the Quakers were a body of Christians for whom he entertained the highest respect, and that he thought, but for the obligations of his birth, he should himself have been a Quaker."

Before West began to work at his "Regulus," he submitted the sketch made for it to the King, who in turn pointed out the space on a wall of one of the royal apartments which he wished it to fill. Consultations regarding the picture led to frequent visits to Buckingham House by the artist, when His Majesty entered into friendly conversations with him that sometimes were continued until eleven o'clock at night. It was during one of these that the King said he had seen in the daily papers an account of the dissensions that had arisen among the Society of Artists, and had led West and others to resign their directorship, of which he would be glad to learn further particulars. At that the artist expressed his dissatisfaction with the Society that from its loosely framed rules had admitted as its directors a body of quarrelsome, incapable, and ambitious young men, to the exclusion of their more distinguished brethren; and dwelt on the need of an association that would unite the best painters, sculptors, and architects in a harmonious body which would work for the furtherance of the arts. The King replied that he would gladly grant his patronage to such a society.

No sooner was West permitted to withdraw from the presence of the Sovereign, than delighted with this hint he hurried to William Chambers to repeat it. He was no less gratified, and in the absence of Joshua Reynolds, who while the quarrels that rent the Society

were taking place was enjoying one of his rare holidays in Paris, they with Moser and Penny, immediately formed themselves into a committee and drew up a rough memorial to be presented to His Majesty. Before this was done Chambers, who enjoyed the friendship of the King, waited on him to learn more exactly his views regarding the proposed academy, and to obtain a definite promise of his patronage, which was freely given, together with the injunction that the formation of the new society be kept a secret, "lest it should be perverted into a vehicle of political influence." The result of this interview encouraged West, Chambers, Moser, and Penny to present a memorial on 28 November, 1768, to the King, in which after expressing their desire to establish an academy of arts, they asked for it his gracious assistance, patronage, and protection. Though they would not trespass on his time to enter into minute details of their plans at that moment, they begged leave to state the two principal objects they had in view, viz. the establishment of a well-regulated school of design for the use of students, and an annual exhibition open to all artists of distinguished merit, where they might offer their work for public exhibition and gain such reputation and encouragement as they deserved. The profits of the exhibition, it was believed, would defray all expenses.

"Your Majesty's avowed patronage and protection

is therefore all that we at present humbly sue for," concluded this memorial; "but should we be disappointed in our expectations, and find that the profits of the Society are insufficient to defray its expenses, we humbly hope that Your Majesty will not deem that expense ill-applied which may be found necessary to support so useful an institution." This memorial was signed by twenty-two artists, two of whom were women; but its signatures did not include that of Reynolds, who by this time had returned to London. The reasons for this were twofold: first because he had no desire to bring himself in this way before the notice of a sovereign who had ignored his existence, though he had patronized artists of inferior merit, and who on the appointment of Painter to the Court becoming vacant in March, 1767, on the death of John Shackleton, had nominated Allan Ramsay to the post; and secondly because Kirby, who it will be remembered had been teacher of perspective to the King, and as such had been admitted to his friendship, had called on Reynolds to assure him that the rumours circulated as to His Majesty's patronage of a projected Academy were entirely without foundation; for on the contrary the King had declared his intention of continuing his protection to the Society of Artists of which Kirby was now president, and of visiting its next annual exhibition. This he had also announced from the presidential chair.

That Kirby—fussy, self-important, and confident of the King's friendship—believed this, is true ; for it was not until a little later he became aware of his mistake, an account of which is given in the "Life of Benjamin West." On the morning when the latter artist had brought his finished picture of the "Departure of Regulus" to Buckingham House, and the King and Queen were admiring it, a page announced that Mr. Kirby had called to see his sovereign, and was told to admit him. Having paid his respects to their Majesties, he was asked what he thought of the picture, when he warmly praised it and asked who had painted it. On that the King introduced him to West who now saw him for the first time.

"It would perhaps be doing him an injustice to say that the surprise with which he appeared to be affected on finding it the production of so young a man, had in it any mixture of sinister feeling," says West's biographer, "but it nevertheless betrayed him into a fatal indiscretion. As a preceptor to the King he had been accustomed to take liberties which ought to have terminated with the duties of that office. He however inadvertently said, 'Your Majesty never mentioned anything of this work to me.' The tone in which this was uttered evidently displeased the King, but the discretion of the unfortunate man was gone, and he inquired in a still more disagreeable manner, 'Who made this frame ?' Mr. West, anxious

to turn the conversation, mentioned the maker's name; but this only served to precipitate Mr. Kirby into still greater imprudence, as he answered somewhat sharply, 'That person is not your Majesty's workman'; and naming the King's carver and gilder said, 'It ought to have been made by him.' The King appeared a good deal surprised at all this, but replied in an easy, good-humoured way, 'Kirby, whenever you are able to paint me a picture like this, your friend shall make the frame.' The unhappy man however could not be restrained, and he turned round to Mr. West and in a tone which greatly lessened the compliment the words would otherwise have conveyed said, 'I hope you intend to exhibit this picture?' The artist answered that as it was painted for His Majesty the exhibition must depend on his pleasure, but that before retiring it was his intention to ask permission for that purpose. The King immediately said: 'Assuredly; I shall be very happy to let the work be shown to the public.' 'Then Mr. West,' added Kirby, 'you will send it to my exhibition.' 'No,' interposed the King firmly, 'it must go to my exhibition—to the Royal Academy.'

"Poor Kirby was thunderstruck; but only two nights before, in the confidence of his intercourse with the King, he had declared that even the design of forming such an institution was not contemplated.

His colour forsook him, and his countenance became yellow with mortification. He bowed with profound humility and instantly retired, nor did he long survive the shock."

In reply to the memorial presented to him, the King stated that he was desirous to see established an Academy of Arts such as had been suggested, to which he was willing to give his patronage and protection; but before granting it his sanction he wished to have the intentions and designs of the memorialists fully and definitely expressed in writing. This they promptly undertook; but while they held meetings to consider the laws and regulations of the new society, William Chambers had frequent interviews with His Majesty, who took the liveliest interest in it, made various suggestions regarding its rules, and in some cases drew them up himself.

After much thought and deliberation these were put into shape, and together with a list of names—that of Joshua Reynolds being at the head—of those who were to form the new Academy, as well as those who were to hold offices as instructors, lecturers, etc., were ready to be submitted to the sovereign on 10 December, 1768, the date fixed by him for the purpose. Before presenting the rules and regulations to the King, it was decided among the artists that they should be read over and finally sanctioned at a meeting to be held on Friday evening the 9th, at the studio of

Joseph Wilton, the sculptor of General Wolfe's monument in Westminster Abbey, and the modeller of the stage coach which had carried George III to his coronation.

On the morning of this day Edward Penny, who had taken an active and interested part in the new Academy, hastened to Castle Street, Leicester Fields, where West now lived, and entering his studio in a perturbed state, said he had just been with Reynolds, who for some reason or another had decided not to attend the meeting that evening. Five minutes later and Moser, in a state of excitement rushed in, and in broken English made a similar statement. This greatly worried West, for although Reynolds had not been consulted about the formation of the new Academy, yet it had been unanimously decided by his colleagues, and sanctioned by His Majesty, that he should be its first President. Without loss of time West laid aside his brushes and went to Leicester Fields to learn for himself the truth of what he had heard.

West found him at work as usual—cheerful, gracious, kindly, and glad to see his visitor. The latter without mentioning what he had just been told, began to speak of the new society and its aims, adding that thirty artists named by the King out of the forty of which it was to consist, were to meet that evening at Wilton's, when it was hoped he would be present.

To this Reynolds lent an attentive ear-trumpet, and expressed surprise that matters had gone so far, for he had been positively assured by Kirby, he said, that the attempt to form an Academy had been undertaken without His Majesty's sanction or authority, and was merely another scheme for rousing dissension among artists, so that he thought it would be derogatory on his part to further its motives in any way. Overcoming his indignation, West assured him that he had been entirely misled; that the rules of the new Academy had been drawn up under the direction or at the suggestion of the King, who had also approved of the proposed members, of which Reynolds himself was to be President; and that he must insist on Reynolds coming to the meeting that evening, where he could satisfy himself which of his informants was to be credited.

To this Reynolds willingly agreed, and it was arranged that West should come and drink tea with him that evening, after which they should go together to Wilton's. Punctually to the hour fixed, West called for a second time that day on Reynolds; but it so fell out, as West's biographer states, that either from design or accident tea was not served till a full hour later than usual, and not until that fixed for the meeting; so that a few minutes before they reached Wilton's, the assembled artists seeing that neither Reynolds nor West had attended, and believing that

something extraordinary and unexpected had occurred to keep them away, were on the point of breaking up. Their disappointment and fears vanished on seeing Reynolds whom they greeted with a hearty cheer, and then without further loss of time the laws of the new Academy were read and the officers named. These were Joshua Reynolds, President; William Chambers, Treasurer; George Michael Moser, Keeper; Francis Milner Newton, Secretary; Edward Penny, Professor of Painting; Thomas Sandby, Professor of Architecture; Samuel Wale, Professor of Perspective; William Hunter, M.D., Professor of Anatomy; Francis Hayman, Librarian. Besides these the original members of the Academy, as finally approved of were Francis Cotes, Edward Burch, John Barker, Mason Chamberlain, John Gwynn, J. Baptist, Richard Cosway, Giovanni Cipriani, Jeremiah Meyer, Joseph Nollekens, Benjamin West, Paul Sandby, Francesco Bartolozzi, Charles Cotton, Nathaniel Hone, William Tyler, Richard Wilson, Peter Toms, Angelica Kauffmann, Richard Yeo, Mary Moser, Joseph Wilton, George Barret, Agostino Carlini, Domenic Serres, John Richards, Francesco Zuccarelli, George Dance, William Hoare, and John Zoffany; nine of whom were foreigners.

On the following morning the laws of the Royal Academy of Arts in London for the purpose of cultivating and improving the arts of painting, sculpture,

and architecture were laid before His Majesty who finally sanctioned and signed them, when it was formally established. Its first general meeting was held on the 14th of the month; and on Sunday 18th December, 1768, Reynolds as president formally submitted to the King a list of officers, council, and professors, already agreed on, which were approved of by the Sovereign under the sign manual. To these, at the suggestion of Reynolds and with the sanction of the King, were added a little later a few honorary appointments which enabled the Academy to attach to itself the names of a few distinguished men, Dr. Franklin, the Greek Professor at Cambridge, being named its chaplain; Dr. Johnson its Professor of Ancient Literature; Oliver Goldsmith its Professor of Ancient History; while the King's Librarian, Richard Dalton, was named Antiquary to the Society.

From the first Reynolds took an active interest in the affairs of the Academy, and on January 2nd, 1769, delivered his first presidential address, explaining the objects of the Society, which he hoped would at least "advance the knowledge of the arts and bring us nearer to that ideal of excellence, which it is the lot of genius always to contemplate but never to attain"; so that the nation might no longer be reproached with neglect of art and indifference to beauty, but gain a reputation for the encouragement of such under George III, as Italy had under Leo X.

This discourse was not only attended by the academicians, but by a large number of the nobility, one of whom at its conclusion said to Reynolds: "You read your discourse in so low a tone that I did not distinguish one word you said"; to which the President smilingly replied: "That was to my advantage, my lord."

Its delivery was followed by a dinner, the idea of which had originated with Reynolds. This was held at the St. Alban's Tavern, and attended by many of the most notable men of the day. The President was particularly anxious that the first exhibition of the Academy should be distinguished by the highest efforts of its members and other artists; and as early as March, 1769, an advertisement was inserted in the newspapers stating that "The President and Council give notice that their Exhibition will open on the 26th of April next. Those artists who intend to exhibit with the Academicians are desired to send their several works to the Royal Academy in Pall Mall on Thursday, the 13th of April, or before six o'clock in the evening of Friday the 14th, after which time no performance will be received. No copies, nor any pictures without frames, will be admitted."

Great expectations were roused by this first exhibition of the Royal Academy, to the opening of which many high officials and other persons of distinction were invited. Nor was interest in it lessened by the

fact that five days previous to its opening Joshua Reynolds attended a levee and was knighted by His Majesty. Like Godfrey Kneller who treated his title lightly, saying that being a man of genius he was already one of God Almighty's nobles, so Reynolds seems to have placed little store on his knighthood, for he left a sitter that he might attend the levee at St. James's, and on that ceremony being ended, he quickly drove home to Leicester Fields that he might paint another sitter, as if nothing in particular had happened. His friends, however, showed great gratification, Goldsmith congratulating him in a burst of confused and joyous words; Johnson breaking through his rule of abstemiousness observed for years, to drink the painter's health in a bumper of wine; Edmund Burke declaring that the sound of his friend's name was so well adapted for a title that it seemed as if it had been chosen for the purpose.

It was hoped that their Majesties would visit the Exhibition on the day previous to its being opened to the public, but this was not fulfilled, their inspection of the gallery being postponed until the 25th of May, two days before it closed. But from the opening day, Wednesday, April 26th, 1769, it drew, as Northcote says, "the greatest crowds, and of the highest fashion" to its rooms, which until then were known as Dalton's Print Warehouse, adjacent to Old Carlton House, and that were subsequently occupied by

Messrs. Christie's auction rooms. Sixpence was charged for a catalogue of the pictures, one hundred and thirty-six in number, of which seventy-nine were painted by members of the Academy, after whose names were placed the letters A.R.A., the remaining fifty-seven being contributed by outsiders. To this first exhibition its President sent four pictures: the Duchess of Manchester and her son as Diana disarming Cupid; Mrs. Blake, the sister of Sir Charles Bunbury, as Juno receiving the cestus from Venus, now at Ashfield, near Burton, Suffolk; Miss Morris as Hope, now at Bowood; and Mrs. Boverie, with her friend Mrs. Crew, half-lengths.

Portraits of Isabella, Lady Molyneux, and of George Pitt, eldest son of Lord Rivers, were sent by Gainsborough, who though his name is not among the original list of Academicians, has the title of A.R.A. appended to it in the catalogue; Nathaniel Hone, whose style so closely resembled that of Reynolds that his work is now occasionally mistaken for Sir Joshua's, sent portraits of the King and Queen; Benjamin West not only exhibited his "Regulus," but also another canvas in the same style, "Venus lamenting the death of Adonis"; Angelica Kauffmann's contributions were "Hector and Andromache," and "Venus directing Æneas and Achates"; Cipriani's an Annunciation; while Francis Cotes sent a portrait of the Duke of Gloucester, a "Boy playing

Cricket," and a Hebe. In the catalogue was inserted "An Advertisement," in which the Academicians thought it necessary to offer an explanation of their charge of a shilling admittance, and that ran as follows: "As the present exhibition is a part of the institution of an Academy supported by royal munificence, the public may naturally expect the liberty of being admitted without any expense. The Academicians therefore think it necessary to declare that this was very much their desire; but they have not been able to suggest any other means than that of receiving money for admittance, to prevent the rooms from being filled by improper persons, to the entire exclusion of those for whom the exhibition is apparently intended."

The receipts taken by the exhibition during the month it remained open amounted to seven hundred pounds minus half a crown. Out of this assistance was afforded to painters according to the Instrument of Institution, which required that two hundred pounds be given to indigent artists out of the profits of the exhibition, their widows, or their children; that received by one of the latter, William Brooking, being the fee of eleven guineas paid for his apprenticeship for seven years to a peruke-maker; the Treasurer of the Academy undertaking to inquire periodically after the lad's treatment and welfare. The sums given in such charities, and in defraying expenses, exceeded the

receipts by nine hundred pounds odd, for which a grant was made from the privy purse. Northcote tells us that such aid was necessary for the first few years, amounting in all to five thousand pounds, adding "but the sums raised by the exhibitions were soon so considerable as not only to render the royal munificence unnecessary, but even to accumulate a large surplus in the funds now forming the basis of a liberal fund for decayed artists."

At the end of the year, December 11th, 1769, a new order or rank of members to be called Associates of the Royal Academy, was created, such Associates to be drawn from the exhibitors, and to be entitled to the advantages enjoyed by the Academicians excepting that of having a voice in the deliberations, or any share in the government of the Academy, or of having admittance to the library save on public days; their number not to exceed twenty; their members to be selected from painters, sculptors, and architects; and each being obliged to exhibit at least one performance, or on omitting to do so without showing sufficient cause, to suffer the forfeit of fifty shillings.

The second exhibition of the Royal Academy which was opened to the public on 24 April, 1770, was notable for its beautiful pictures; Reynolds sending to it three-quarter portraits of Goldsmith, Johnson, and George Colman, with a full-length of Miss Price, the latter known as the "Little Shepherdess,"

being now at Hatfield House; and two pictures of the "Babes in the Wood"; Gainsborough contributing five noble portraits, including one of David Garrick; Francis Cotes sending no less than eleven; and Cosway three; while two pictures of smaller size than he usually painted were exhibited by an artist whom Horace Walpole speaks of as "one West, who paints history in the taste of Poussin, who gets three hundred pounds for a piece not too large to hang over a chimney, and who has merit but is hard and heavy, and far unworthy of such prices."

It will be seen that three prominent artists mentioned in these pages took no part in the foundation of the Royal Academy. The first of these, Allan Ramsay, was probably at the time in Italy, a country which it was his delight to visit constantly up to the time of his death. The second, Thomas Gainsborough, was still at Bath painting portraits for a living, and landscapes for his own satisfaction, for beautiful as they were, they found few purchasers; while the third, William Hogarth, was dead. Argumentative, vivacious, blunt-spoken to the end of his days, he continued to hate convention, to rail at affectation, and to believe in himself; for only a little while before he escaped from a world in which he never had his deserts, on being told that Dr. John Freke, surgeon of St. Bartholomew's, had declared that he, Hogarth, was as great a portrait painter as Vandyck, he replied, "There Freke was

right, and so I am, give me but time and let me choose my subject."

That he might cut as fine a figure as his more prosperous neighbour, Joshua Reynolds, Hogarth started a handsome coach, its body bright yellow, its panels covered with an emblematic crest; but how little this grandeur really impressed him is shown by the fact that though he drove in it one day to the Mansion House to call on Lord Mayor Beckford, he forgot all about it on returning, and walking home on foot in heavy rain, appeared before his distracted wife drenched to the skin. The happiest days in his life were those he spent in his house at Chiswick, separated from the church by a hedge-bordered shady lane, surrounded by gardens where nightingales sang through summer nights, approached by a filbert avenue where he played ninepins, and having in front a great mulberry tree, around which he, a childless man, loved to romp with bright bevies of his neighbours' children, and afterwards entertain them under its shade with all that delighted their greedy appetites.

It was at Chiswick that he passed the last summer months of his life, employing himself chiefly in retouching his plates, and taking exercise by riding abroad on horseback. His health however seemed failing, and he complained that he "was no longer able to think with the readiness, and work with the elasticity of spirit of his earlier years"; and it is probable

he had some foreshadowing of his approaching death, for he wrote at this time in one of his memorandum books the following confession, which any man might feel happy in being able to make: "I can safely assert that I have invariably endeavoured to make those about me tolerably happy; and my greatest enemy cannot say I ever did an intentional injury; though without ostentation, I could produce many instances of men that have been essentially benefited by me. What may follow God knows." In the early autumn he suffered from great weariness and depression, and on one sombre day towards the end of October, 1764, had himself carried from Chiswick to his house in Leicester Fields, in a weak condition but still cheerful and having no notion that the time of his departure was near. For no sooner had he got home than he began to write a letter, which he left unfinished because he felt tired. He then went to bed but had not been in his room long when the violent ringing of his bell alarmed the house, and his wife's niece Mary Lewis first reaching him found him seriously ill. Doctors were summoned and remedies tried, but two hours later he died from a suffusion of blood among the arteries of the heart, being then within a month of his sixty-seventh birthday. His remains were laid in the peaceful churchyard of Chiswick, a costly altar tomb being erected over them, paid for by the subscriptions of his friends at the suggestion of

David Garrick, who wrote a verse in praise of the "great painter of mankind" which was inscribed upon it. By his will Hogarth left all his property, which chiefly consisted of his engraved plates, to his wife, who for many years continued to live at the "Sign of the Golden Head," where she sold her husband's engravings and let lodgings. Later on the establishment of the Royal Academy, she was one of the first to whom it allowed a pension. It is interesting to know that her house in Leicester Fields was later occupied by two persons distinguished in different ways: the first of them being Thaddeus Kosciuszko, who headed the Polish rebellion against the Russian forces of Catherine the Great; the second being the Countess Guiccioli, for some time mistress of Lord Byron.

It may be added that the Incorporate Society of Artists of Great Britain, to give it its full title, for many years continued its exhibitions at Spring Gardens, in rivalry to the Royal Academy. Though Joshua Kirby in writing to a friend described the honour conferred on him by his election as President, as being "very like dressing a man in a fine robe and then fixing a weight to the train of it, that with all his abilities he was just able to tug after him," yet he struggled hard for those with whom his lot was cast. Soon after learning from the King, in the way described, that the Royal Academy was in course of formation, he presented to His Majesty a petition in which

he described the wrongs the Society of Artists had suffered from its dissenting members, and humbly prayed that the royal patronage might be exclusively extended to his Society.

The reply made to this stated that the Society of Artists of Great Britain had His Majesty's protection; that he did not mean to encourage one set of men more than another; that having already extended his favour to the society by Royal Charter, he had also encouraged the Academy; that his intention was to patronize the arts, for which purpose he would visit the exhibitions of both societies. This he subsequently did, though his visit to the Spring Gardens collection of pictures in 1769, was the last he paid this society. As he gave aid out of the privy purse to the Academy, so also did he give a donation, though merely a hundred pounds, to the Society of Artists. The latter body numbered over a hundred members, and so flourishing was it in 1772, that it expended seven thousand five hundred pounds in building a great room for its exhibitions on the site later occupied by the Lyceum Theatre. This dragged the society into debt from which it was subsequently unable to recover, and being obliged to sell its exhibition room, its last show of pictures was held at its old quarters in Spring Gardens in 1791. In October, 1836, its last surviving member, Mr. Robert Pollard, gave up its Royal Charter, books, and papers to its prosperous rival, the Royal Academy, in whose possession they remain.

CHAPTER VII

The first of the Royal Academy dinners—Goldsmith tells Horace Walpole of the tragedy of Thomas Chatterton—The King grants his Academicians offices in old Somerset Palace—Some of its former occupants—It is pulled down and rebuilt—A proposal by the Academicians to decorate St. Paul's Cathedral—Sir Joshua speaks of its advantages to the Dean—His warm support of the scheme and offer to recommend it to the King—The Academicians draw up a petition to His Majesty who approves of the proposal—It is submitted to the Bishop of London—Some account of his career—His fear of Popery entails a loss to the nation—Monumental statues not allowed in the Cathedral—The Academicians ornament their new rooms at Somerset House—Sir Joshua works on Sundays—James Northcote as a boy—His tramp to London and first interview with Reynolds—He becomes a pupil of the great artist—A letter from London—Painting draperies and sitting as a model—He sees Edmund Burke and Oliver Goldsmith for the first time—Goldsmith's longing for affection makes him intentionally absurd—Sir Joshua's care of his reputation—Johnson's ignorance of art—Northcote's explanation of Johnson's abuse of painting and acting—Johnson's warm admiration and affection for Sir Joshua and Fanny Reynolds—His compliment to the latter—At Reynolds's dinner-table.

IT was not until the following year, on St. George's Day, 23 April, 1771, that the first of the Royal Academy dinners which are continued to the present day, was given at the suggestion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who handsomely dressed, his face beaming

with pleasure, his ear-trumpet at hand, presided; around him his fellow Academicians, and five-and-twenty gentlemen of high position and distinguished taste who were their guests. The dinner was held in the Exhibition Rooms in Pall Mall, on whose walls were already hung the pictures which the public would be admitted to view on the following day.

Of the oppressively sane sentences which Dr. Johnson uttered to attentive listeners, of the Hibernian sprightliness of the cataract of talk let loose by Edmund Burke, of the wit with which David Garrick could delight the ear of a duke or an earl, of the delicate satire of Topham Beauclerk, nothing has been handed down to us; though of one conversation that passed amid this celebration of high achievement and brilliant festivity, there remains a record; its subject the saddest tragedy that ever darkened the long story of struggle, despair, and death, which constitutes the history of literature.

This conversation, begun by Goldsmith, dressed for the occasion in sprightly colours, was listened to with an air of languid tolerance by Horace Walpole, and concerned the achievements of a youth of seventeen named Thomas Chatterton, who had quitted "Bristol's mercenary walls," to use his own phrase, and come to London full of high hopes of securing the attention of the town; not only by his story of having found in the muniment chest of an ancient

church the manuscripts of some old poems, but by the genius which thrilled, uplifted, and promised him fame; proof of which he gave by his political essays, magazine articles, books written for musical burlettas, songs, and the words of oratorios, all fresh as the lilt of a thrush though coming from the wretched garret of a sack-maker in Brook Street, Holborn, where he lived on a halfpenny roll and a glass of water a day; and where driven to madness by the mockery of his glowing dreams, he had poisoned himself with arsenic. Among others he had striven to win the attention of the supercilious Horace Walpole, who had he extended a helping hand, might have saved from suicide this marvellous boy, but whose disdainful silence must have added another sting to a soul in revolt—a soul that may have been conscious of the remorse which this pallid-faced, bright-eyed gentleman felt at this dinner on hearing for the first time of the tragedy to which his neglect had contributed.

It was in the same year, 1771, that the King granted to the Academicians a suite of rooms in the old palace in the Strand known as Somerset House, from being built by that Duke of Somerset who was brother of Jane Seymour, Queen Consort of Henry VIII, and therefore uncle of Edward VI, during the early years of whose reign he was Lord Protector of the realm. Before this palace—to build which the great cloister on the north side of St. Paul's, together with the

priory church of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell, had been pulled down—was finished, the Duke of Somerset had been beheaded for high treason on Tower Hill, 1552; so that the first person of note to lodge there was the Princess Elizabeth, who on coming to the throne gave apartments in it to Cornelius de la Noye, alchemist, who there kept weary vigils tending alchemical fires while he strove to manufacture precious stones and transmute base metals into gold for Her Majesty's use.

In the following reign the palace was assigned by the wisest fool in Christendom, James I, to his wife, Anne of Denmark, for her residence; and by Charles I to his Consort, Henrietta Maria, who employed Inigo Jones to build her a chapel within its walls for her use and that of other Catholics, and where from her settling in England to the time of the Civil War, Mass was celebrated daily from six in the morning until noon. On the death of Charles II it became the residence of his widow, Catharine of Braganza; and when on finding England under William and Mary no longer a desirable country to live in she returned to Portugal in 1692, a number of the poorer members of the nobility were given free apartments there, it being used for the same purpose as Hampton Court Palace is to-day.

On Buckingham House being settled on Queen

Charlotte in lieu of the ancient dower-house of the queen consorts of England, it was decided that the latter should be used for Government offices, when as already stated, the King desired that certain apartments in it might be reserved for the use of the Academicians. But though their schools, libraries, lecture and council rooms were in the palace, their exhibitions were held as before in Pall Mall; and continued to be held there until 1780, when regardless of the historic associations or the quaint beauty of the palace the name of whose builder is unknown, the Government decided to pull it down, and in 1775 employed William Chambers at a salary of two thousand a year to erect the structure now known as Somerset House. In a large room at the top of this new building, situated in the north front and overlooking the Strand, the exhibitions were held for several years.

Their new quarters were given them with certain reservations, as may be gathered from a letter of John Robinson, Secretary to the Lords of the Treasury, dated 11 April, 1780, and addressed to Sir William Chambers, who by the way, having in 1771 sent some drawings of his temples and pagodas at Kew Gardens to the King of Sweden for his admiration, was in return honoured by being made a Knight of the Polar Star by His Swedish Majesty, and allowed to use the style and title of a knight by George III.

In this communication the Secretary to the Lords of the Treasury stated that he was commanded by their lordships to direct Sir William to deliver into the hands of the Treasurer of the Royal Academy, all the apartments allotted to the Academy in the new buildings in Somerset House; but he was to signify to the officers of the Academy that they, their families, servants, tradesmen, and visitors were to use for their apartments the stairs of communication only, and not the great stair for any common purpose. And as the residence of the secretary in the Academy was an indulgence lately proposed, which upon trial might be found inconvenient, or the rooms he occupied be found wanting for other purposes, they were to be held by him merely at pleasure, to be resumed whenever it be thought proper.

No tubs nor pots of earth with or without flowers or trees, creepers or other shrubs were to be placed in the gutters, on the roofs or parapets, on the windows or niches of the buildings, and no paper "or other thing" was to be plastered or pasted against the walls; no change was to be made in the destination of the apartments appropriated to the public use, nor were they to be let under any pretext whatever. From this date, 1780, the Royal Academy exhibitions were held here during the life of its first president and until 1837, when they were removed to Leicester Square.

The Academicians had been settled some two years in the quarters first granted to them (1771) in old Somerset House, when at one of their meetings it was incidentally mentioned that if the chapel belonging to the palace and built by Inigo Jones was decorated with mural paintings of religious subjects, it would show the advantage of ornamenting churches and cathedrals in this manner, provide an example that might be followed, help to plant a much-needed love of art in the British public, and be of incalculable service to art students, not only of their own but of future generations. Sir Joshua listened with kindling eyes to this suggestion, and then surprised and delighted his colleagues by saying that instead of decorating the chapel, they should devote their proffered work to the great metropolitan cathedral, whose space and grandeur would afford a fuller scope for their art, and where it would have a wider field for public admiration.

This recommendation was hailed with enthusiasm, and all were anxious to contribute to a work which would enrich the nation, add beauty to St. Paul's, and secure immortality to themselves. The authorities whose permission it was necessary to secure for this scheme were the King, the Lord Mayor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral. As Reynolds and West had an invitation to dine a few days

later with the Dean of St. Paul's—Dr. Thomas Newton, who also nominally filled the see of Bristol —it was arranged that they should broach the subject to him in the first instance. Of his approval all felt hopeful, as he was known to be a lover of art and letters, though with regard to the introduction of pictures in the Cathedral, it was remembered he had prevented the erection of what he described as a "Mass House" at Clifton.

It may have been owing to this latter fact that, as we learn from the Anecdotes prefixed to Newton's works, the intentions of the Academicians were represented to him by Sir Joshua in a manner likely to win the approval of any unprejudiced man; for the President stated that the art of painting would never gain maturity or perfection in England unless it could be introduced into churches as in foreign countries; individuals being fonder of their own portraits or those of their friends than of historical or religious subjects; and that to make a beginning the Academicians offered their services to decorate St. Paul's with scriptural designs. They were quite willing that these should be seen, examined, and sanctioned by the Academy before they were offered to the Dean and Chapter; that the latter might receive or refuse them as they thought them worthy or unworthy of the places for which they were intended; that none should be put up that did not meet with unanimous approval; and

that all should be furnished without any expense to the cathedral.

St. Paul's, he continued, had all along wanted some such ornaments, for rich and beautiful as it was outside, it was cold and plain inside. It was true that Sir James Thornhill had painted some scenes in the life of St. Paul in the cupola, the worst part of the church that could have been painted, for the pictures there were most exposed to the changes of the weather, suffered greatly from damp and heat, and let what would be done to prevent it, must soon fade and perish. But besides the exposure of these pictures to the weather, they had been placed at such a height as to prevent them from being conveniently seen, and added little to the beauty of the church; while below there were compartments intended by the architect for bas-reliefs and paintings, with which they would have been filled had not William of Orange taken the money intended for that purpose and spent it on his foreign wars, so that Sir Christopher Wren had complained that his wings had been clipped. These were the spaces which it was the purpose of the Academicians to fill, so that a fair opportunity was offered of supplying a want of which the nation had been deprived.

Dr. Newton, on hearing this, declared the Academicians had made a noble and generous offer, and that he highly approved of pictures representing scenes

from the Old and New Testament being introduced into the cathedral; a view which in days when the symbol of Christianity was not tolerated in the churches of a large section of Christians, was considered proof of a liberal mind. And not only did he sanction the scheme, but he volunteered to mention it to, and if necessary to urge its acceptance on His Majesty, to whom it was thought suitable that a memorial should be presented by the Academicians, explaining their intentions and asking for his approval.

Delighted that their suggestion had in the first instance met with such friendly approval, they called a meeting at which it was provisionally decided that Sir Joshua's contribution to St. Paul's should be a Nativity; Benjamin West's a representation of Moses delivering the Tables of the Law; while other pictures to be added were Christ raising the widow's son; the raising of Lazarus; Christ rejected by the Jews, etc.

They next proceeded to draw up a petition to the King, in which after expressing their gratitude for the countenance and support he had given to their Academy they continued :—

"Your Majesty, by your individual encouragement of the arts of design, has given an example to the world equally wise and princely in the magnificent biblical paintings with which you have decorated St. George's Hall and the Royal Chapel of Windsor. Herein you have directed those arts to their true

end, the cultivation of religion and virtue; for it is by such means only that they have risen to perfection in Greece and Italy, and it is by these means only that they can rise to perfection in any other country.

"As artists, as lovers of virtue and our country, we anxiously wish to see the truly royal example which Your Majesty has given, followed in the principal church of these kingdoms, St. Paul's Cathedral, according to the intention of its architect Sir Christopher Wren; and instead of the present unfinished state of its inside, we wish to see it decorated in a manner suitable to the beauty and dignity of its external architecture. Therefore the historical painters in your Royal Academy, convinced of the advantage which would arise to the arts and the country, in every point of view, from such an undertaking, are desirous to engage in the decoration of this noble building with paintings from the Bible in the most liberal manner; for they conceive that the very small compensation with which their love for their art would induce them to be satisfied, might easily be raised by keeping open the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy a fortnight longer than usual, for two or three years; or by an allowance for a certain time from the additional price, which the exhibition of such works would bring to the cathedral; or by any other means that Your Majesty's wisdom may condescend to suggest.

"As the arts of design owe their present prosperity in these kingdoms to Your Majesty's paternal care, so we are tempted to look up to your gracious protection for the commencement of the intended work, in obtaining the consent of the Dean and Chapter for that purpose, and for any other preparatory measures which in Your Majesty's wisdom may seem needful."

While this petition was being drawn up, Dr. Newton took an early opportunity of introducing the subject to the King, who warmly approved of it, and greatly praised the liberality and spirit of his Academicians. With this view the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed, and the Lord Mayor added his sanction. After this there remained but one individual, the most important of all, whose permission it was necessary to obtain before the decorations could be undertaken; a consultation with whom on the subject had been postponed, out of fear of his prejudices against the scheme, and in the hope that the united approval of His Majesty and the Archbishop would influence his decision. This was Dr. Richard Terrick, a man, according to Horace Walpole, "with no glimmering of parts or knowledge, who on the merit of a sonorous delivery, and by an assiduity of backstairs address, wriggled himself into a sort of general favour, and by timing his visits luckily, had been promoted by the Duke of Devonshire to the See of

Peterborough. Yet he had been the first, notoriously obliged to that Duke, to abandon him on his fall, sailing headlong with the tide after the favourite's triumph."

The triumph of the favourite here referred to, was the seizure of the office of Prime Minister, 26 May, 1762, by Lord Bute, which however he retained with difficulty but for eleven months, when on being charged by an infuriated public with having accepted bribes from France to bring about a peace between that country and Spain greatly to the prejudice of England, he was obliged to resign his position. On his fall Dr. Terrick, who was rector of Twickenham, was, says Walpole, "lavish to me of invectives against that Lord; and sifted me to learn in what channel Court favour was likely to flow."

But though no longer Prime Minister, Lord Bute continued to rule the King through his mother, seeing which the Bishop of Peterborough soon corrected his mistake; for making out a distant affinity with Thomas Worseley, Surveyor of the Board of Works, a kind of riding-master to the King, and a creature of Lord Bute's, he, through the aid of this kinsman, soon wormed himself into the favour of one able to reward with rich benefices the shepherds of the spiritual fold. Although George Grenville on the resignation of Lord Bute, had accepted the office of First Lord of the Treasury only on the assurance of

the King, that the favourite should no longer exercise any influence in the closet, and that the Ministry should have the full confidence of His Majesty, yet when he desired to appoint Dr. Newton to the bishopric of London, Grenville learned that his privilege had been usurped by Lord Bute, who had obtained a promise from the King to nominate Terrick to that see when it became vacant.

Three bishops had been intriguing for this enviable position while Dr. Osbaldison, who then held it, ungraciously tried their Christian patience by lingering where he was not wanted. These were Terrick, Newton, and Warburton. On the first of these gaining the coveted benefice, the second gave no outward sign of inward heart-burning; not so the third, for Dr. Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, took an early opportunity when preaching before the King and Terrick, of dwelling on the responsibility of those who had the disposal of great rewards, and then boldly asserting that preferments were bestowed on unworthy objects, as Gray mentions, paused, "turned himself about and stared directly at the Bishop of London."

Having gained the sanction of the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Lord Mayor to the scheme for decorating St. Paul's Cathedral, Dr. Newton waited on Dr. Terrick to request his. The latter, a lean, grim man, with lined face and stony

eyes, heard him without interruption to the end, when "with the energy of an ancient martyr," he said, "My good Lord Bishop of Bristol, I have already been distantly and imperfectly informed of such an affair having been in contemplation, but as the sole power at last remains with myself, I therefore inform your lordship that whilst I live and have the power, I will never suffer the doors of the metropolitan church to be opened for the introduction of popery."

Against this judgment Dr. Newton pleaded many arguments, among them that general opinion seemed to be in favour of the decorations, and "that whatever might have been the case in the days of our first reformers, there was surely no danger now of pictures seducing our people into popery and idolatry; they would only make scripture history better known and remembered." But these were listened to with impatience, and rejected determinedly. Still persevering, Bishop Newton, as he tells us in the Anecdotes already mentioned, rather than the scheme should be totally laid aside, proposed that as in many churches a figure of Moses was seen supporting the Commandments above the Communion table, so in St. Paul's the two doors near the Communion table might be decorated by Sir Joshua and Benjamin West with pictures of the Nativity and the giving of the Law; representations in which there "was nothing to en-

courage superstition or idolatry"; but the same answer was made, his lordship "would not admit popery" into St. Paul's. The scheme was therefore rejected, and in this way through the ignorance and bigotry of Dr. Terrick, London lost an opportunity of having its cathedral ornamented with works of art that would have made it the pride and glory of the nation.

The suggestion of introducing sacred pictures into churches was not however without having its effects; for from this date a reaction set in from the Puritanism practised by Cromwell and his followers, who burned priceless libraries and pictures, smashed stained windows of incalculable value, broke carvings and wrecked cathedrals which even Elizabeth had spared, and gave a blighting stroke to art in England from which the country has never recovered. The reaction soon became evident when Benjamin West's representations of scriptural subjects were hung in the chapel royal, Windsor; when his "Death of St. Stephen" was placed above the Communion table of St. Stephen's, Walbrook; when his "Angels announcing the Birth of Christ" found a place in Rochester Cathedral; his "Raising of Lazarus" in Winchester Cathedral; his "St. Michael chaining the Dragon" in Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge; his "St. Paul" in the chapel at Greenwich. But St. Paul's Cathedral continued to exclude not only pictures but monumental statues

which were supposed to be mysteriously connected with popery; for when Dr. Newton, who died in 1782, expressed in his will a desire to have a monument erected to his memory in the cathedral, for which he left five hundred pounds, his relatives were not allowed to carry out his wishes, and were obliged to place the memorial in St. Bride's Church.

As the Academicians were not allowed to decorate St. Paul's, they, on taking possession in 1780 of their newly built quarters in Somerset House, determined to show the desirable effects of mural painting in their own rooms. Taking a prominent part in this work, the President painted the library ceiling with a design representing Theory sitting on a cloud and holding in her hand a scroll, on which are the words, "Theory is the knowledge of what is truly nature." Cipriani decorated the coves with designs symbolizing Design, Character, Commerce, and Plenty; while Carlini contributed a bust of the King; and another foreigner, Nollekens, a bas-relief of Cupid and Psyche. The ceiling of the lecture-room was painted by Benjamin West, his subject being the "Graces unveiling Nature"; while such foreigners as Biagio Rebecca and Angelica Kauffmann, added their contributions to embellishing the home of the English Royal Academy. On the walls of the council-room were hung the full-sized portraits of their Majesties, wearing royal robes and seated on thrones; perhaps the most finished and

beautiful that Sir Joshua ever painted, and that were the only portraits for which the King, as such, and Queen Charlotte sat to him. Even then George III did not give Reynolds a commission, these paintings being executed at the artist's suggestion for the Academy whose property they remain; while studies for them had to be made on some occasions at least, during public ceremonies at which their Majesties were present; one of them taking place in July 1771, when the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, the King's younger sons the Dukes of York and Cumberland; the Prince of Brunswick; the Queen's brother, the Duke of Mecklenburg; together with the Dukes of Marlborough and Grafton, the Earl of Albemarle and Earl Gower, were installed Knights of the Garter. A great dinner and a brilliant ball followed, watched by a vast crowd of genteel people, some member of which taking a fancy to Reynolds's gold snuff-box, deftly transferred it to his own possession.

The fact that Sir Joshua had become a Knight and the President of the Royal Academy by no means increased the number of his sitters, which on the contrary decreased from the time these honours were conferred on him; probably because he had already painted so many members of the nobility and in that way exhausted his clientèle; and also because a rival more considerable than any he had heretofore met with was soon to attract the town. This falling

off in the number of his patrons was not seized on by him as an excuse for idleness, for always eager for work he was incessantly painting, or studying his great collection of prints and etchings of the old masters when the brush was no longer in his hand ; so that he spent seven days a week in his studio, a favourite saying of his being that the "pupil in art who looks to Sunday as an idle day will never make a painter."

It was his habit of working on Sundays—at this time considered a terrible breach of the law—that largely prevented one of his sisters, Mrs. Johnson, from entrusting to his care a son of hers who had shown a decided talent for painting, and whom Sir Joshua had offered to receive into his house and instruct in his art. This excellent young man was then put into the Church. He died young. A daughter of another of Sir Joshua's sisters, Theophila Palmer, was in 1770, when she was thirteen years old, adopted by him, and remained a member of his household until she married Mr. Richard Lovell Gwatkin ; while in 1773, her elder sister Mary, a handsome vivacious girl, joined his domestic circle and remained a member of it during the remainder of his life. Both these nieces sat to him as models for many of the fancy subjects which he began to paint when the demand for portraits decreased.

It would have been delightful to later generations if either of them had left some account of the intimate life of their uncle; his daily habits, his intercourse with his distinguished friends, his method of work; but though they have not done so, another member of the household has to some extent made up for their omission by writing a biography of Reynolds, which though desultory and insufficient, is welcome as coming from an associate and a pupil of the painter. This was James Northcote, who was born in the Market Place at Plymouth, 22 October, 1746. His father an honest unimaginative watchmaker in that town, having no sympathy with the talent for drawing shown from earliest youth by his son James, would not listen to his wishes, or to the representation of friends that the lad should be apprenticed to an artist, but forced him to learn his own trade which he considered a more certain means of making a living. Though outwardly suppressed, the boy secretly encouraged his love of art and his veneration of artists, above all of Joshua Reynolds, the engravings of whose pictures he had seen; and when the latter visiting Plymouth in 1762, with Johnson, was pointed out in the midst of a vast crowd to Northcote, then in his sixteenth year, he "got as near to him as I could from the pressure of the people, to touch the skirt of his coat, which I did with great satisfaction to my mind," as he writes.

The few spare hours allowed him now and then during his apprenticeship were spent by him in sketching landscapes and attempting portraits. By the time it ended he was in his twenty-fifth year and had saved from the salary allowed him as much as five guineas, to which he was enabled to add another five by the sale of his drawings. Rich with this sum, he determined to quit Plymouth and betake himself to London, being irresistibly tempted to this step by hearing of the great city from his elder brother Samuel, who was an assistant to a watchmaker named Holmes in Fleet Street, but had returned to his family for a holiday. Permission for James to seek success as an artist was grudgingly given by his father, and only on the condition that if all did not go well with him in a brief time, he must return to the watchmaker's bench. He was however encouraged in his intention by the Mudge family, old friends of Joshua Reynolds and neighbours of the Northcotes, who by the way claimed to be an offshoot of the ancient family of the same name settled for centuries at Upton Pyne in Devonshire, the head of which in the present day is represented by the Earl of Iddesleigh. From one of the Mudge family James Northcote received a letter of introduction to Reynolds, and with this hugged in his breast he and his brother, having bade farewell to their parents and their sister Polly, set out early on the morning of

Whit Sunday, 1771, for the great city where he hoped to gain fame and fortune.

Light-footed and bright-spirited they quitted Plymouth hurriedly, until they came to the top of a hill surmounting it, when they paused and looked down on the sleeping town, its spires and towers sombre against the pale gold of the east, its roofs huddled together, faint smoke rising slowly from their chimneys into the serene blue sky, over all the Sabbath peace unbroken by sounds of traffic, and made more somnolent by the slow strokes of the town clock which they had heard from the beginning of their lives, and that one of them desired to hear no more. As they stood there Samuel muttered some words of regret, at which his brother turned away impatiently, burning with eagerness to see London, to which for sake of economy they were to take their way on foot.

After trudging the long white roads for ten days, sleeping at night in hay-lofts and under hedges, they reached the capital, when Samuel went to his master in Fleet Street, and James took a room with a Plymouth woman, Mrs. Lefty, the wife of a grocer in the Strand. Without giving himself time to rest or to see the wonders of the city, James made his way to Leicester Fields on the morning following his arrival, and rapping at Reynolds's door handed to the black servant who opened it, and whose appearance

had startled him, the letter of introduction to his master. Northcote was still lost in admiration of the room into which he had been shown, with its handsome furniture and beautiful pictures, when Reynolds entered to find a rustic-looking youth, small of stature, exceedingly thin, with strongly-marked features and piercing dark eyes, looking, as was said of him, "like a rat who has seen a cat."

Sir Joshua received him with kindness, inquired after old friends and neighbours, and gave him permission to copy any pictures in his collection. For that Northcote expressed his gratitude and at once set to work in copying a picture by a foreign artist. He now found himself inexpressibly happy "in breathing, if it may be said so, in an atmosphere of art; having until this period been entirely debarred, not only from the practice of the art itself, but even from the sight of pictures of any excellence, as the county of Devon at that time did not abound with specimens, and even those few which are scattered about the county I had no opportunity of ever seeing." Having brought with him two water-colour drawings, one of a drake and the other of the Eddystone Lighthouse, he showed them to Reynolds, the first of which was praised by him, and the second found but small fault with; and then on hearing that Northcote intended to offer it for sale to a printseller or engraver, Sir Joshua volunteered to speak about it to

one likely to purchase it. This offer led to an introduction to a printseller on Ludgate Hill named Hooper, who though unwilling to buy the lighthouse or the drake gave employment to Northcote to colour birds and flowers, for which he paid him a shilling a sheet, a sum on which its recipient managed to support himself. To execute this work he rose at three o'clock in the morning, so that by nine he was able to finish it, when the remainder of the day was given to copying works of art in Sir Joshua's house. Though he was not at first a pupil of Reynolds, he was on the same footing with the two pupils then living in the painter's house, one of whom a young Irishman named Clarke, owed his position to Goldsmith's interest in him and did little credit to his master; while the other Gill, the son of a pastrycook at Bath, subsequently gained some reputation as an artist.

Writing within a couple of weeks of his settling in London to a patron at Plymouth, William Elford, a banker, a politician, a whist-player, and an amateur artist who had taken an interest in and encouraged Northcote's early efforts, the latter says, "I fear I shall not be able to make many copies of pictures because I intend to do them with much care, and consequently slow; for the quantity which Sir Joshua has in his collection is innumerable, some of them by the most famous masters and fine beyond imagination.

His house is to me a very paradise. The first day I went to paint there I saw one of Sir Joshua's pupils, and on conversing with him was much surprised to find that his scholars were absolute strangers to Sir Joshua's manner of working, and that he made use of colours and varnishes which they knew nothing of, and always painted in a room distant from them; that they never saw him unless he wanted to paint a hand or a piece of drapery from them, and then they were always dismissed as soon as he had done with them.

"He has but two young gentlemen with him at this time, and they both behave to me with great good-nature, and are very willing to assist me, but one of them tells me that a man must make a great proficiency in the art to make a figure in London, as England is now become the seat of painting. I find Sir Joshua is so entirely occupied all day with business or company that I have seldom an opportunity of seeing him. But at some time, when he has seen more of my work, I shall speak particularly to him and desire to know if he thinks it possible that I could live in London, at any rate by the practice of the art."

In the house where he lodged Northcote found a youth whose beginnings and whose ambitions were similar to his own, speaking of whom he says in writing to his former patron, "He is about twenty years of age, is called James, and was bred a clock

maker in the city of Norwich, but always had the most violent desire to be a painter, and used to get up at all hours in the morning to practise the art. At last his master seeing how strong an inclination he had for painting, allowed him two hours every day out of his working time to employ in it. This continued for a short time, but when the young man read and saw Sir Joshua's 'Discourse,' which was the second given to the Royal Academy, he could no longer suffer the confinement of his business; and without having any personal knowledge of Sir Joshua he sent him a letter, for as he told me, he thought that a man so fired with the art as Sir Joshua seemed to be by his 'Discourses' would surely have a pleasure in assisting all lovers of it. He received an answer which I have not seen, but in consequence of it his master gave him up the remaining part of his time, and he immediately came to London where he copied some of Sir Joshua's pictures; but afterwards by means of an old woman servant he got admission into the house of Mr. Lock, a man of large fortune, who has a vast collection of paintings and sculpture, and a great judge of both.

"Here he copied some of the best pictures without the knowledge of Mr. Lock, apprehending his displeasure; but so much on the contrary did it turn out, that when Mr. Lock discovered it he immediately invited him to his house to copy any pictures he

chose, and also when he found so violent a desire in him for the art, he told him he should make the house as his own, and very soon after placed him with Mr. Cipriani, whom Mr. Lock had brought over from Italy, and who is one of the greatest history painters in England; he also allows pocket money to the young man whose name is Burton."

Within a fortnight of his return to Fleet Street, Samuel went back to Plymouth, probably to take his brother's place in their father's business. That James was expected to return also may be gathered from the first letter written by him from London to his father, dated 14 June, 1771, and given with some others in the brief biography prefixed to his "Artists' Book of Fables." Addressing his father as Honoured Sir, he says, "I make no doubt but you are surprised at my remaining in London after Samuel left it, but I must beg the liberty of staying some little time, probably I shall not like it long, though now I prefer it to every place I ever saw. I intend to copy one or two pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds. He is vastly kind. Last Monday I dined with him at five o'clock, which is his constant hour, and eat mackerel. . . . I wish Polly could but see Sir Joshua Reynolds's house; it is to me a heaven. I am in perfect health, and pray that you may all remain so. I hope Samuel is safely arrived; I want much to know about his journey."

Time now sped quickly for Northcote, who continued to colour a sheet of birds in the morning and to copy Sir Joshua's pictures for the remainder of the day. "All the family behave with great good-nature to me, and particularly Sir Joshua's two pupils. Miss Reynolds has promised to show me her paintings, for she paints very fine, both history and portrait," he writes. Then in a letter dated 25 July, 1771, he hastens to tell his father of the great good luck which has fallen to him. "Ever since I have been at Sir Joshua Reynolds's," he writes, "he has behaved with the utmost kindness, but he has now given me a proof of his friendship, which I could not possibly have conceived. I hope it will meet with your approbation, as I should be very backward to take any steps without your consent; but last Tuesday evening as I was looking at the pictures in the Gallery, Sir Joshua came in and asked me if I was examining the paintings, and where I lodged, and what I gave for my lodging. He then said if it was agreeable to me I should come and live at his house for five or six years, and then says he, first I shall be of assistance to you, and then you to me, and so we shall assist each other; for there was no doubt he thought that I should make a good painter, from my great attention to it. The pleasure this gave me was more than ever I felt before in my whole life, or that I can express. I told him that it would be the most excessive

pleasure to me, but asked him if I was not too old? He said no, for the only objection to persons of my age was that they were commonly too fond of dissipation, which put an end to all study, but with application it was the best time of life, because they were the more capable of making observations and a quicker progress than a boy of fourteen.

"I hope my absence from you is attended by no inconvenience, as my brother is with you to give his assistance; and I make no doubt but whatever concerns my welfare or happiness will give you pleasure. I am to thank Mr. Mudge for this, as it was entirely by his means I was introduced to Sir Joshua. I cannot wish him more happiness than he has been the cause of giving me. Give my duty to my mother, and love to Samuel and Polly, and compliments to other friends. I am in perfect health and high spirits as you may suppose; pray send me you are the same. Whether I shall make a good painter or not is uncertain, but you may depend on it I will try with all my might. Mrs. Lefty says she thinks hers is a lucky house, and faith I think so too."

As a pupil he was expected among other things to paint backgrounds, draperies of portraits, and sit as a model, duties which were not so easy of accomplishment as might be supposed, for Northcote says he often found it provoking, after he had been labouring on the drapery for a portrait, to see Sir Joshua with a

few masterly sweeps of his pencil destroy nearly all his pupil's work, and turn it into something much finer. "I remember," he continues, "once when I was disposing the folds of drapery with great care on the lay figure, in order to paint from it into one of his pictures, he remarked that it would not make good drapery if set so artificially, and that whenever it did not fall into such folds as were agreeable, I should try to get it better by taking the chance of another toss of the drapery stuff, and by that means I should get Nature which is always superior to Art."

Regarding the painting of the drapery of portraits, he writes to his brother in November, 1772: "I should have painted William Elford before this time, but was not able to do so, as I was employed for Sir Joshua on the most considerable job I have yet done; it is painting the drapery to the whole-length picture of the Duke of Cumberland; he is dressed in his installation robes, Knight of the Garter, which I paint from the Duke's own robes put upon a layman; the dress is very grand, as you may suppose from some pictures you may have seen, I believe, of the Kings in the Town Hall.

"Sir Joshua is now painting Mr. and Mrs. Garrick in one picture, which is about the bigness of that in the fore-room of grandfather and grandmother. The other day Garrick came into the dining-room where I was painting and spoke to me. Sir Joshua talks of

From the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

JOHN STUART, THIRD EARL OF BUTE.

p. 276.

painting a very large picture of him in a great many different characters ; he is to be in his proper character in the middle speaking a prologue, and about fourteen or fifteen of the most remarkable characters which he has acted to be standing hearkening to him ; and he will sit for all these. I heard him say he had acted in all one hundred and twenty different characters, and out of them the most remarkable are to be chosen. You need not mention it, as it may never happen." In this surmise Northcote was correct, for though the subject and treatment of this picture were frequently spoken of by the artist and the actor, it was never painted.

Some twelve months later Northcote was employed on more important work than painting drapery. In October, 1773, Lord Bute sat to Sir Joshua for a head, and on the 15th of the following December Northcote wrote to his brother to tell him, "I have had the honour to copy Lord Bute's face, as there are to be two whole-lengths made of him. His picture by no means gives me an idea of his character, if it be as the world says. He is a tall genteel figure, with a mean Scotch face ; his skin very yellow, and small blue eyes, with a smile on his face which gives a look of vast good-nature and humility. Sir Joshua has made a most extraordinary fine head of him, and vastly like him. He must find it very different from the time when he was forced to have bruisers behind his

coach to protect him, for now he comes in a chair without any servants, and often walks home on foot in his surtout without any state."

It was while fulfilling another of his duties, that of sitting as a model for one of Count Ugolino's children, that Northcote first saw Edmund Burke, who thin and dark, with a dignified, reserved air, came into Sir Joshua's studio, and on the model being introduced to him as a pupil, said, "Then I see that Mr. Northcote is not only an artist, but has a head that would do for Titian to paint," a compliment that was long remembered and often repeated by the man of whom it was made. Not only in Reynolds's painting-room, but at his dinner-table, did Northcote become acquainted with many of Sir Joshua's distinguished friends; it being classed among the most considerable advantages that he gained by a residence under his master's roof, that it brought him into familiar intercourse with the most eminent men of the day.

It was at Sir Joshua's table that he first dined with Samuel Johnson, of whose uncouth and slovenly manner of eating he had previously been bidden to take no notice, as the great man became angry if he thought it was being remarked. It was customary with Reynolds to ask visitors who dropped in to see him in the morning to join him later at his five o'clock dinner, when his sister or the servants receiving no

notice of these invitations, there were frequently more guests than seats, but never a lack of hospitality—even when Edmund Burke brought with him crowds of his Irish relatives who had come to visit the capital. At Sir Joshua's table Northcote constantly had an opportunity of seeing David Garrick, who seemed to him never at his ease in company, but always striving to attract attention and to excel in wit, and he remembered hearing the great actor complain that it was a very great fatigue to him to dine out so frequently as his interest seemed to require. "From hence," says Northcote, "we may conclude that he considered himself as under the necessity of being a very delightful companion, which he certainly was; but had he been content to be like other persons at table it would then have been no fatigue to him. On the same account he avoided ever going to a masquerade in any specific personification, as that would have involved him in the difficulty of supporting his character as a wit"—a criticism borne out by Goldsmith in the famous epitaph he subsequently wrote upon the actor.

At the cost of two shillings for a seat in the gallery of Drury Lane Theatre, he had gone to see him play Hamlet, when Northcote was delighted beyond bounds at his excessive grace, and was surprised that he "looked so young and was so nimble when compared with his appearance when he comes here in his

great coat, for he begins to grow quite an old man." In another letter to his brother worth quoting, Northcote says to him, "You will think me quite extravagant when I tell you that I was at the play again; but I hope you will think it a sufficient excuse when I say that it was to see Mr. Garrick act King Lear; and I underwent pretty severe squeezing, but got well into the pit at last, though I think it would have been worth while to have run a risk of one's life to have seen him, it so infinitely exceeded my expectations. I went without my dinner, as I was at the door a little after three o'clock. You know it is impossible to describe it; I can only give you some idea by the effects. The people were not content by clapping, but hollered out with mighty shouts when he was going off; for I believe even the most ignorant people are sensible of his excellence, and it had such an effect on me that my hair seemed to stand on end upon my head. Sir Joshua says it is by much the most capital part he can act, and that he thinks he does it without fault, but in every other he has a good many."

It was at Sir Joshua's, at a time when everything seemed new and wonderful to Northcote, that his great desire to see Oliver Goldsmith was gratified, for on entering the dining-room one day he there saw a man of gentle though clumsy bearing, with a round plain face, out of which shone thoughtful kindly

eyes; turning to whom Reynolds said, "This is Dr. Goldsmith. Pray, why did you wish to see him?" Northcote was much confused by the suddenness of the question, and answered hastily, "Because he is a notable man" (meaning, as he states, a man of eminence) at which Sir Joshua burst into a hearty laugh, and said that in future Goldsmith should be called the notable man. Northcote says he found the latter unaffected and good-natured, but wholly ignorant of the art of painting, which he often confessed with much gaiety.

From the wistful look in his eyes might have been gathered that strong desire to be loved which he frequently mentioned to Sir Joshua, observing at the same time "how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did, from the envy that attended it." From this the painter was convinced, as Northcote tells us in his biography of Sir Joshua, that Goldsmith was intentionally absurd, "in order to lessen himself in social intercourse, trusting that his character would be sufficiently supported by his works. If it was his intention to appear absurd in company, he was very often successful. This in my own opinion was really the case, and I think Sir Joshua was so sensible of the advantages of it that he, yet in a much less degree, followed the same idea, as he never had a wish to impress his company with any

awe of the great abilities with which he was endowed, especially when in the society of those high in rank." For all that when told one day of an indiscreet speech that Goldsmith had made, he said: "What a fool he is thus to commit himself, when he has so much more cause to be careful of his reputation than I have of mine," meaning as Northcote explains, "that even the most trivial circumstance which tells against an eminent person will be remembered as well as those in his favour; and that the world watch those who are distinguished for their abilities with a jealous eye."

Though Goldsmith confessed and made merry over his ignorance of art, Johnson whose lack of knowledge concerning painting was as great if not greater, frequently expressed his contempt of it in a manner which seemed to justify and demand approval of his opinion; this in itself being characteristic of the simplicity of the one and the egotism of the other man. Once at Sir Joshua's table he told the company which largely consisted of painters, that when at Oxford he found Richardson's "Treatise on Painting" on the stairs, and taking it to his rooms read it through, when he was surprised that so much could be said upon the art. But notwithstanding his ignorance of painting, he had frequently inserted in his writings many eulogiums on it, after he became acquainted with Reynolds and with the desire of pleasing his

friend to whom he privately admitted that "in his whole life he was never capable of discerning the least resemblance of any kind between a picture and the subject it was designed to represent."

It is mentioned by Mrs. Thrale, the wife of the wealthy brewer living at Streatham Place, a vivacious, showy, loquacious woman, that one day at her hospitable table Sir Joshua spoke of a picture which he greatly praised, when Johnson called out: "It has often grieved me sir, to see so much mind as the science of painting requires laid out upon such perishable materials. Why do you not oftener make use of copper? I could wish your superiority in the art you profess to be preserved on stuff more durable than canvas." Sir Joshua replied by stating that there would be a difficulty in obtaining a plate sufficiently large for historical subjects, and was about to make some further objection, when Johnson roughly interrupted him by saying: "What foppish obstacles are these? Here is Thrale, who has a thousand ton of copper; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterwards. Will it not, sir?" he asked his host.

Commenting on this anecdote Northcote says that Johnson's affectation of utter scorn of painting was such "that he used to say that he could sit very quietly in a room hung round with the works of the greatest masters and never feel the slightest disposi-

tion to turn them if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he had turned them. But in his 'Life of Savage' we find him far more cruel and unjust towards another profession, where he expresses his utter scorn of actors likewise, only because he wished to mortify Garrick, whose affluence acquired in that profession, was the object of his envy. It was the prosperity of Sir Joshua also, as well as Garrick's, that was the crime with Johnson; notwithstanding the friendship and indulgence with which they both always treated him, yet their worldly superiority created bitterness in his heart; and as he could not humble or despise the men, he therefore vented his spleen on their profession. Johnson had that weakness likewise which commonly attends men of all professions, of estimating that as the highest of which they know the most: thus we see how the bad passions may mislead the wisest men. But what most consoled his haughty spirit was to indulge himself in a philosophical contemplation of those who possessing great abilities, were yet more wretched than himself, and as such had his compassion. Savage was his darling, in whose cause no labour nor ingenuity was to be spared in the attempt to vindicate the conduct of an impostor chained down to misery by vice; but Savage he felt his inferior; and had Garrick or Sir Joshua been as wretched as Savage, he would readily have done them

as much service, and not have pretended to despise their professions."

Northcote continues by saying that Johnson ought to have reflected that much of the prosperity gained by Garrick and Reynolds "was a natural consequence of their virtues as well as of their abilities; and of an application incessant and untired, even to the injury of their constitutions, in order to become eminent in the departments they had adopted; whilst he was loitering away his time in idleness and feeding at another man's table, whose profession or trade he held in utter scorn. No wonder Johnson was not rich."

But whatever Johnson might say of painting and painters, he always felt and expressed a sincere admiration and affection for Reynolds, to whom he was indebted for many favours, and in whose debt he died. Proof of this is given even at an early stage of their friendship, for when the great artist was taken ill in 1764, while Johnson was on a visit in Northamptonshire, the latter wrote, "I did not hear of your sickness till I heard likewise of your recovery, and therefore escaped that part of your pain which every man must feel to whom you are known as you are known to me. Having no particular account of your disorder, I know not in what state it has left you. If the amusement of my company can exhilarate the languor of a slow recovery, I will not delay a day to

come to you, for I know not how I can so effectually promote my own pleasure as by pleasing you, in whom if I should lose you, I should lose almost the only man whom I call a friend. Pray let me hear of you from yourself or from dear Miss Reynolds."

For Fanny Reynolds he also had a warm friendship, though of women in general he had a poor opinion, declaring on one occasion that he thought they "were most pleasing when they held their tongues"; and on another that they "set no value on the moral character of men who pay their addresses to them; the greatest profligate will be as well received as the man of the greatest virtue, and this by a very good woman, by a woman who says her prayers three times a day"; and on this statement being contradicted by members of the sex so outrageously defamed, he made matters worse by saying, "No, no; a lady will take Jonathan Wild as readily as St. Austin if he has three pence more; and what is worse, her parents will give her to him." The compliment which Northcote heard him pay to Sir Joshua's sister was therefore the greater from his opinion of womankind in the aggregate, and that arose from her telling him one evening when he came to drink tea with her, that although she had been offered a box at the oratorio to hear Miss Linley sing, yet she had remained at home to enjoy the pleasure of his company; to which he gallantly replied, "And I madam, would rather sit with you

than sit upon a throne." After this she was probably prepared for his comment, equally sincere, on the publication of her poor platitudes called "An Essay on Taste," in the pages of which he declared there was "such depth of penetration, such nicety of observation as Locke or Pascal might be proud of."

His friendship for both brother and sister made him a frequent guest at Sir Joshua's table, where among the crowd already spoken of might be found at one time or another the most ingenious and brilliant men of the day, belonging to such various professions as art, literature, science, as well as politicians, lawyers, and peers distinguished for their ability or eccentricity. It is amusing however to read a statement made by Northcote, that though the great artist's table became notable for its assembly of celebrities, yet there were certain men of title, intimate friends of Reynolds, who "had strangely conceived such a formidable idea of all those persons who had gained great fame as literary characters, that I have heard Sir Joshua say he verily believed he could no more have prevailed upon them to dine at the same table with Johnson and Goldsmith than with two tigers."

CHAPTER VIII

Incidents in Sir Joshua's life—He visits Goldsmith in his lodgings at Islington—Goldsmith is arrested for debt and rescued by Johnson—The sale of the "Vicar of Wakefield"—The novel is put away in the publisher's desk—Goldsmith publishes his poem, "The Traveller"—Its dedication to his brother—Johnson praises it—Its author becomes a medical man—His limited and brief practice—Publication of the "Vicar of Wakefield"—Various criticisms of the novel—Goldsmith tries his hand at writing a comedy—Which is offered to Garrick—The actor-manager remembers an old offence—John Rich, manager of Covent Garden Theatre—Garrick's dealings with Goldsmith—George Colman, the new manager of Covent Garden—Fresh vexations for an unfortunate playwright—The first production of "The Good Natured Man"—Its reception—The supper that followed—Goldsmith's tortures—He furnishes his chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple—His parties to friends and his love of children—Working hard at new projects—"The Deserted Village" is published—The dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds—Who selects a subject for a picture from the poem—Johnson is offered and accepts a pension—His letter to Lord Bute—A mighty foolish noise is made—The uses to which Johnson applied his money—Some of his pensioners—How Miss Williams made tea—Johnson has an interview with the King—His opinion of His Majesty's manners—Subject for conversation at the club and taverns—Lady Bolingbroke is divorced—Her marriage with Topham Beauclerk—Johnson's cold civility.

MEANTIME various events besides the establishment of the Royal Academy and the knighting of Joshua Reynolds occurred that were of personal concern to his friends, and were discussed by him and

them at their meetings at the club in Gerrard Street. One of these related to the fortunes of Oliver Goldsmith. Notwithstanding the disparities between their temperaments, the eternal disparities between the Saxon and the Celt—Reynolds even-tempered, prudent in his worldly affairs, self-contained, and careful to observe the conventionalities; Goldsmith with elastic spirits ever varying from elation to depression, improvident, indifferent to the future, free-spoken—time but ripened their friendship and deepened their mutual esteem. While writing essays and reviews for magazines, composing the libretto of an oratorio on the subject of the Captivity of Babylon, or translating for the publishers in order that he might be able to pay for his lodgings, buy daily bread, and have something to spare for those whose needs were greater than his own, Goldsmith was at the same time devoting his highest intellects to other works such as his novel the "Vicar of Wakefield," or his poem, "The Traveller." That he might have more time for such labours, and occasionally that he might escape the clutches of the bailiffs, he absented himself from the club, from the houses of his friends, from the Mitre Tavern, and other places which he usually frequented, and taking himself to rural Islington hired lodgings there at the house of Mrs. Fleming.

It was here that Joshua Reynolds, not having seen

him for some time and being anxious as to his welfare, sought Goldsmith. On rapping at the door roughly pointed out to him by the landlady and receiving no answer, he turned the handle and walked in to find his friend seated at a desk from which his head was turned towards a corner where a little dog was sitting on his haunches looking imploringly at his master, who with uplifted hand was evidently rebuking him for having toppled over a moment previously. Reynolds advanced and was warmly greeted by one who above all things valued the friendship of those he loved; after which the painter glancing at the writing which was still wet as it lay on the desk read the lines—

> By sports like these are all their cares beguiled;
> The sports of children satisfy the child.

It was also at his Islington lodgings that he was visited by Johnson, to whom he had sent a message saying he was in great distress, as the latter related to his biographer Boswell, "and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the

bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press which he produced to me. I looked into it and saw its merits; told the landlady I should soon return; and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."

The publisher to whom Johnson sold the manuscript was Francis Newbery, of Paternoster Row, nephew of John Newbery, of St. Paul's Churchyard, who had such faint hopes of realizing profit from his bargain that he kept it in his desk for a considerable time, and published it only when the success of "The Traveller" had considerably raised Goldsmith's reputation as an author. This delightful contribution to English literature, which bore on its title-page the words, "The Traveller; or a Prospect of Society; a Poem. By Oliver Goldsmith, M.B. Printed by J. Newbery in St. Paul's Church Yard," was issued on 19 December, 1764, price one shilling and sixpence. In simple and touching language it was dedicated to his brother, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, who was not only a clergyman but a scholar, and who must have read it with dim eyes and a swelling heart. "As a part of this poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland," the poet said, "the whole can now

with propriety be only inscribed to you. It will also throw light upon many parts of it, when the reader understands that it is addressed to a man who despising fame and fortune, has retired early to happiness and obscurity with an income of forty pounds a year. I now perceive, my dear brother, the wisdom of your humble choice. You have entered upon a sacred office where the harvest is great and the labourers are but few; while you have left the field of ambition where the labourers are many and the harvest not worth carrying away. But of all kinds of ambition—what from the refinement of the times, from different systems of criticism, and from the divisions of party—that which pursues poetical fame is the wildest."

While it passed through the press "The Traveller" had been read by Johnson, who greatly approving of it declared "there has not been so fine a poem since Pope's time"; stinted praise in itself, for perhaps in the English language there is no higher example of verses in which are combined polished unforced diction, a flow of melodious metre, rich colouring, joyous playfulness, unembittered philosophy, and above all an exquisite tenderness that often deepens to pathos and touches the heart, to leave it calmer and wiser if sadder than before. Johnson wrote a laudatory notice of it in the "Critical Review," and a few days after the publication of the poem read

it aloud, with intervals of tea-drinking, to his friend Fanny Reynolds, whose feminine comment at the finish was, "Well, I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly."

Though admired and praised by those who read it, their number was apparently small for its sale was slow, which caused the "St. James's Chronicle" to express surprise, and to make its author consider he had come too late into the world to gain poetical distinction; for he remarked, as but few at any one period could possess it, "a man of genius can now hardly acquire it"—a saying which on being repeated by Boswell to Johnson led him to remark that it "is one of the most sensible things I have ever heard of Goldsmith. It is difficult to get literary fame, and it is every day getting more difficult." However, the reputation of the poem gradually spread, and four editions were issued within eight months of its publication, while it was translated into more than one foreign language. It is known that its author received twenty guineas for "The Traveller," but it remains doubtful if this sum was increased when fresh editions were called for.

An unlooked-for result of this success was, that he reverted to his former calling as a medical man. Always readily impressed by those whose friendship he trusted, and willing to act on their advice, he had taken this step at the suggestion of Joshua Reynolds,

who desirous of Goldsmith's advancement, told him that it would be prudent in him to take advantage of his popularity as an author to forward his profession as a physician ; that a regular calling gave a man social standing and consideration in the world, and that the profession of literature and medicine were not only compatible but had been successfully carried on by Garth and Arbuthnot in the past, and by Smollett and Armstrong in the present. In consequence of this prudent counsel, Dr. Goldsmith a few days later astonished his friends by appearing before them dressed in purple silk small clothes, a scarlet roquelaure buttoned close to his chin, a flowing wig, cocked hat, sword and cane : the dress worn by physicians of his day.

Simultaneously with his new clothes he endeavoured to put on a grave pompous manner, which was ill adapted to his naturally simple air and the frank expression of his plain honest face. But neither his professional suit nor his solemn expression, both of which he must have regarded as tiresome restraints, had the effect of bringing him practice, and his brief career as a doctor came to an end when a lady who had called him in to prescribe for her maid, was sagacious enough to prefer the advice of an apothecary; learning which Goldsmith, rattling his sword and flourishing his cane, quitted her house in indignation. That evening he assured the club he would leave off

prescribing for his friends, to which Topham Beauclerck replied, "Do so, my dear Doctor. Whenever you undertake to kill let it be only your enemies."

It was not until the success of "The Traveller" was assured, that the younger Newbery considered it probable he might regain the sixty pounds paid by him for the manuscript of the "Vicar of Wakefield." Accordingly the novel was published in March 1766 in two volumes, price six shillings bound, or five shillings sewed. This delightful story which has given the stage a beautiful play; which has afforded many painters inspiration for their art; which caused Walter Scott to bless its author; which was the sole "literary gratification" Charles X of France found in his exile; and that Goethe declared had formed his education "in the decisive moment of his mental development," as well as secured him unabated delight in his old age, was hardly noticed on its publication.

Boswell who never understood or appreciated Goldsmith, but who never lost an opportunity to underrate or ridicule him, has little to say of the book beyond a reference to the sale of its manuscript by his hero; Garrick was of opinion that little could be learned from it; Johnson though he declared he had seen merit in its manuscript, seems to have said nothing in its praise when published; while the reviews of the day when not absolutely ignoring the

book, or contenting themselves with giving a synopsis of the plot which it might be thought would satisfy the curiosity of intending readers, spoke of it in much the same tone as the "Monthly Review," which stated that "Through the whole course of our travels in the wild region of romance, we never met with anything more difficult to characterize than the 'Vicar of Wakefield'; a performance which contains beauties sufficient to entitle it to almost the highest applause, and defects enough to put the discerning writer out of all patience with an author capable of so strangely under-writing himself. With marks of genius equal in some respects to those which distinguish our most celebrated novel writers, there are in this work such palpable indications of the want of a thorough acquaintance with mankind, as might go near to prove the author totally unqualified for success in this species of composition, were it not that he finds such resources in his own extraordinary natural talents, as may in the judgment of many readers, in a great measure compensate for his limited knowledge of men, manners, and characters, as they really appear in the living world. In brief, with all its faults, there is much rational entertainment to be met with in this very singular tale."

For all that, the novel gradually worked its way into public favour, so that within six months of its publication it had gone into three editions, while

its author lived to see it reach its sixth issue. Such as it was, his success failed to bring him freedom from incessant toil, relief from pressing necessities, or from the humiliation of borrowing from booksellers who consequently regarded him as their bondsman. The sixty pounds received from the "Vicar of Wakefield" had paid his debts and secured him decenter rooms than he had heretofore occupied, at Garden Court; a miserable reward for such a book, though in speaking of the sale of its manuscript at Joshua Reynolds's dinner-table Johnson, prefacing his remarks by saying that neither himself nor Newbery thought it would have had much success, added that the sum given was a fair price, "Had it been sold after 'The Traveller,' he might have had twice as much money for it, though sixty pounds was no mean price. The bookseller had the advantage of Goldsmith's reputation from 'The Traveller' in the sale, though Goldsmith had it not in selling the copy."

While now drudging for the publishers, compiling a volume of "Poems for Young Ladies," and writing an English grammar, for which latter he received five guineas, he—desirous of obtaining the gains resulting from a successful play such as the "Clandestine Marriage," which had for its joint authors David Garrick and George Colman—devoted his spare time to writing a comedy which he called "The Good Natured Man." Always a constant attendant

at the theatre and interested in all that concerned it, he had heard from dramatic writers at first hand of the tedious delays, humiliations, constant disappointments, and interminable vexations that awaited the acceptance and production of a play, and was well aware of the tribulations that lay before him in striving to get his "Good Natured Man" on the stage. To this subject he had in his "Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning" devoted a chapter in which he stated that a drama must undergo a chemical process before it is presented to the public, for it must be tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser, and suffer from repeated corrections till it may be a mere *caput mortuum* when it arrives before the public. At the present time old pieces were revived and scarcely any new ones admitted, he said, and then in words that might be appropriate to his theme to-day, continued: "The actor is ever in our eye; the poet seldom permitted to appear; and the stage instead of serving the people, is made subservient to the interests of avarice. Getting a play on even in three or four years is a privilege reserved only for the happy few who have the arts of courting the manager as well as the Muse, who have adulation to please his vanity, powerful patrons to support their merit, or money to indemnify disappointment. Our Saxon ancestors had but one name for a wit and a witch. I will not dispute the

propriety of uniting those characters then; but the man who under the present discouragements ventures to write for the stage, whatever claim he may have to the appellation of a wit, at least has no right to be called a conjurer."

As for himself, he stated that he was above theatrical connexions in every sense of the expression. "I have no particular spleen against the fellow who sweeps the stage with a besom, or the hero who brushes it with his train. It were a matter of indifference to me whether our heroines are in keeping, or our candle snuffers burn their fingers, did not such make a great part of public care and polite conversation. Our actors assume all that state off the stage which they do on it; and to use an expression borrowed from the green-room, every one is up in his part. I am sorry to say it, they seem to forget their real characters."

To David Garrick, a man of extreme vanity and excessive sensitiveness, who feared and flattered critics, who dreaded censure as much as he delighted in applause, these remarks were taken as applying to himself, and bitterly resented; though it was not until Goldsmith was seeking the post of secretary to the Society of Arts, and personally waited on Garrick to solicit his vote, that the latter gave expression to his feelings. Gracious even to condescension, carefully dressed from his well-powdered wig to the silver buckles on his shoes, wealthy, the greatest actor the

stage had seen, the host and the associate of peers, uplifted beyond his highest hopes, he explained to the man before him, awkward in gait, confused in speech, slovenly in dress, and worst of all poor, that the author of the "Present State of Polite Learning" "had taken pains to deprive himself of his assistance by an unprovoked attack upon his management of the theatre," and it was impossible that Dr. Goldsmith could lay claim to any recommendation from him. Nothing abashed by the magnificent player or by his ungracious reply, and too unworldly, too honest to apologize or prevaricate, Goldsmith merely answered that in truth he had spoken his mind, and believed what he had said was very right; at which, says Tom Davies who relates the incident in his biography of Garrick, "the manager dismissed him with civility."

The estrangement between these two men, each distinguished in his profession, was not bridged over by time; not that Goldsmith harboured enmity against the man who refused to oblige him, or so far as can be learned, joined Johnson in his sneers at little Davy, to whom he had refused admission to the club on the ground that "he will disturb us sir, by his buffoonery"; and it is certain that in writing his first comedy Goldsmith had no hope of its being accepted by the manager of Drury Lane Theatre.

The only alternative was to offer his play to John

Rich, who not only managed the fortunes of Covent Garden Theatre, but had played harlequin on its stage in a manner that vastly diverted the curious. The hospitality he graciously extended in his house in Bloomsbury Square to scores of cats, that slept in his bed, sat on his dining-table, and shared his meals at their pleasure, gave him a reputation for eccentricity among literary men, who were merely jealous that a like hospitality and appreciation was not extended to themselves; for it was his habit on receiving the manuscripts of their tragedies, farces, or comedies, to fling them into a deep drawer of a cabinet where they remained untouched for months or years, until their authors becoming impatient came to claim them, when they were given permission to go to the drawer and help themselves, for he wanted none of their rubbish.

From such delays and indignities Goldsmith was saved by the death of Rich; and as the affairs of his theatre were left in hopeless confusion, there seemed no possibility of being able to produce a new comedy on its stage. It was therefore plain to his friends that he must offer his play to Garrick, and to secure it a favourable consideration, an endeavour was made to overcome the coolness between them by kindly Joshua Reynolds, who brought them together in his studio. The good results expected by the painter from this meeting were not realized; a patronizing air on the

part of the actor and a stolid reserve on that of the author were not to be overcome even by the urbane speeches and tactful conduct of their common friend. Garrick, mindful of all the playwright would owe him if his comedy were produced at Drury Lane, forgot what he might possibly owe in turn to one who afforded him an opportunity of displaying his talents—an obligation of which Goldsmith had some idea; or as Tom Davies puts it, "Mr. Garrick who had been so long treated with the complimentary language paid to a successful patentee and admired actor, expected that the writer would esteem the patronage of his play a favour. Goldsmith rejected all ideas of kindness in a bargain that was intended to be of advantage to both; and in this was certainly justifiable. I believe the manager was willing to accept the play, but he wished to be courted to it; and the Doctor was not disposed to purchase his friendship by the resignation of his sincerity."

Garrick however consented to read the comedy, and then with its manuscript in his pocket left the author and his friend together, when the latter, freed from the restraint of Garrick's presence, blurted out that "he could not suffer such airs of superiority from one who was only a poor player"; to which Reynolds gently replied, "No, no, don't say that; he is no poor player, surely." After this Goldsmith was held in suspense for weeks and months regarding the

fate of his play. According to Sir James Prior, it was at first regarded with favour by Garrick, though he took care "not to express himself so frankly as to be unable to retreat from any rash inferences of the author." Though Garrick assured both Reynolds and Johnson that it could never gain public favour, he at the same time led Goldsmith to believe his comedy would soon be placed upon the stage, which induced its unfortunate author who was drudging away to keep want at bay, to ask Garrick to lend him a few pounds on account, which the manager did; from which act a more friendly feeling arose between them. This unfortunately did not long continue, for the play being something of a novelty—as it had neither the coarse humour nor polished innuendo of the comedies of Wycherly or Congreve, nor the mawkish sentimentality of those of Richard Steele, but had a cleanly sprightliness, wholesome spirit, a semblance to nature, and spontaneous mirth that were new to the stage—Garrick, believing its unconventionality must hinder its success, desired that many important alterations should be made.

To this Goldsmith strongly objected at first, but persuaded by his friends and urged by his need of money, he consented after some time to make concessions. With these the manager of Drury Lane was not satisfied, and as Goldsmith was unwilling to make further alterations, Garrick suggested that "The

Good Natured Man" should be submitted to the arbitration of his reader, Whitehead, as drivelling a poet-laureate as ever lent ridicule to that post. To have his work submitted to such a man was considered an indignity by Goldsmith, who believed that Garrick had canvassed his friends for an unfavourable opinion of his comedy. Letters passed between them in which Goldsmith blurted out his mind, while Garrick, serene and suave, declared he "felt more pains in giving words to his sentiments than Doctor Goldsmith could possibly have on receiving them."

At this point of their discussion, and while yet the fate of Goldsmith's comedy was undecided, Garrick quitted town to visit his native Lichfield, leaving Goldsmith a prey to suspense and anxiety. But at a moment when the prospects of winning success as a dramatic author seemed darkest, came a whisper that raised his naturally buoyant spirit. This stated that a fourth share in Covent Garden Theatre had been bought by George Colman, the offspring of a good family, who born in Florence in 1725, where his father was Envoy to the Court of Tuscany, had been educated at Westminster School and at Oxford, and been called to the Bar; but who much to the regret of his relatives had forsaken law for literature, and worse still to their minds, had written for the stage. "The Clandestine Marriage," the play by which he is best remembered—written in collaboration with

Garrick—had been produced in the previous year February, 1766, and though highly successful had brought about much wrangling between them as to their respective share in its authorship. When in May, 1767, Colman's mother, sister to the Countess of Bath, died leaving him a legacy of six thousand pounds, he resolved to purchase a fourth share of Covent Garden Theatre and open it under his own management, with the assistance of two partners. At this news Goldsmith, smarting under the slights received from Garrick, and not unwilling to ally himself to his rival, lost no time in sending Colman "The Good Natured Man," and a few days later received an answer which greatly soothed his harassed spirit, and led to his writing a letter to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre, dated 19 July, 1767, in which he says :—

"DEAR SIR,—I am very much obliged to you both for your kind partiality in my favour, and your tenderness in shortening the interval of my expectation. That the play is liable to many objections I well know, but I am happy that it is in hands the most capable in the world of removing them. If then, dear sir, you will complete your favours by putting the piece into such a state as it may be acted, or of directing me how to do it, I shall ever retain a sense of your goodness to me. And indeed though most probably this be the last I shall ever write, yet I can't help

feeling a secret satisfaction that poets for the future are likely to have a protector who declines taking advantage of their dependent situation, and scorns that importance which may be acquired by trifling with their anxieties. I am dear sir with the greatest esteem, your most obedient humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

To have been able to free himself from Garrick's patronage and vexatious suggestions must have been an infinite relief to Goldsmith, yet in the letter acquainting him with what he had done, which he considered it his duty to write, there is a complete absence of triumph or retaliation such as he might naturally feel or express. After speaking of the comedy which he had "as a friend submitted to your perusal," he stated he had now handed it to another, "thinking it wrong to take up the attention of my friends with such petty concerns as mine, or to load your good nature by a compliance rather with their requests than my merits. I am extremely sorry that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judgment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure you, sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any other account, but am with a high opinion of your abilities and a very real esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant."

To this came a letter from Garrick which shows him no less civil than his correspondent, in which he says: "Sir, I was at Birmingham when your letter came to this place, or I should have answered and thanked you for it immediately. I was indeed much hurt that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and friendly attention to your play for the remains of a former misunderstanding which I had as much forgot as if it had never existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat, that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly would in receiving them. It has been the business, and ever will be, of my life, to live on the best terms with men of genius; and I know that Doctor Goldsmith will have no reason to change his previous friendly disposition towards me, as I shall be glad of every future opportunity to convince him how much I am his obedient servant and well-wisher."

But Goldsmith had not yet seen the end of vexations which then, as now, seem the penalty of writers for the stage. Five months passed between the date of the acceptance and the production of his comedy, which time had its own share of irritating incidents and petty vexations; for the proprietors of the theatre quarrelled over the actress who was to play the heroine's part, one of them considering that want of virtue compensated for lack of talent in his mistress, an opinion to which Colman would not agree; the prin-

cipal actor Powell, complaining that his part gave him "no opportunity of displaying his talents"; the first representation being pushed backwards and forwards so that Drury Lane had time to produce a rival comedy which took the town. But through these aggravating circumstances Goldsmith's friends stood by him; Reynolds exerting himself to cheer Goldsmith in his frequent fits of despondency; Burke reading the play in his own house to a select company whom it convulsed with laughter; and Johnson not only writing a prologue for it, but attending its rehearsals in the author's company.

When eventually "The Good Natured Man" was produced on Friday evening 29 January, 1768, the members of the Club attended the theatre to give it what encouragement they could. That indeed was sorely needed, for Johnson's ponderous prologue fell heavy on the ears of those who had come to be amused; Powell's sulky manner and disdainful treatment of his part added nothing to their gaiety; while other members of the company were inefficient or dull; and disaster would have been inevitable but for Shuter, who played his part with zest and made his audience roar with laughter. When the curtain fell amid mingled applause and disapprobation, the author, who—attired in a coat of Tyrian bloom satin and a breeches of garter blue silk, ordered for the occasion—had sat through the five acts with fluctuating hopes

and a throbbing heart, and who now believed his production damned, forgetful of himself and mindful of the good services done him by another, hurried behind the scenes and seizing Shuter's hands thanked him heartily before all, and told him "he had exceeded his own idea of the character of Croaker, and that the fine comic richness of his colouring made it almost appear as new to him as to any other person in the house."

Half an hour later he was sitting at supper with the members of the Club in Gerrard Street, and though he did not eat, he was apparently in high spirits, treating the success or failure of his comedy with apparent indifference, laughing long and loud, singing his favourite song of "An Old Woman Tossed in a Blanket Seventeen Times as High as the Moon," and in other ways striving to hide his real feelings; for all the while as he afterwards told his friend Dr. Percy, "I was suffering horrid tortures, and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than ever to cover all that, and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imagined to themselves the anguish of my heart." When however all the members of the Club save Johnson and himself had left the room at the Turk's Head—Burke clapping him on the shoulder and giving him encouraging words, Sir

Joshua, more reserved but not less affectionate, silently and sympathetically clasping his hand—Goldsmith, no longer able to bear the strain, and knowing himself safe with one whose tenderness of heart he had discovered under his rough exterior, suddenly burst into tears, and laying his arms on the table buried his twitching, miserable, homely face in them, while he swore that he would never again write for the stage.

Fortunately the comedy had far more success than its author in this dark hour thought it possibly could have. A scene in the third act where the hero passes off the bailiffs as his friends, though free from vulgarity or coarseness, was considered by the sentimentalists as an outrage on their refined feelings. According to John Hoadly, a writer for the stage whose work was not remarkable for decency, "It degraded his Good Natured Man, whom we are taught to pity and have a sort of respect for, into a low buffoon, and what is worse, into a falsifier, a character unbecoming a gentleman." When this scene was removed from the acting version, the comedy ran for ten nights, on one of which it was commanded by their Majesties who appeared to enjoy its performance. It was also played occasionally during the remainder of the season; and when Shuter selected it for his benefit, its author in gratitude for the service that actor had been to him, sent him ten guineas for a box. Goldsmith's profits from the theatre brought

him four hundred pounds, to which were added the sum of fifty pounds paid him by Griffiths for its publication. The play in which the bailiff scene, a natural and delightful bit of comedy, was included, was eagerly read by the town ; the first large edition being sold out on the second day of publication, when a second fifty pounds was paid him on its sales.

With such unaccustomed wealth at his command his first action, probably undertaken on the advice of friends, was to buy the lease of chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple, for which he paid four hundred pounds. These he furnished with such unusual luxuries as a four-post bedstead with crimson and white check furniture, a Wilton carpet, a mahogany dining-table, oval gilt-framed mirrors, blue moreen window curtains with a sunshade line and pulleys, a mahogany sofa covered with blue moreen finished with a double row of brass nails and a check case, a Bath stove, a copper teakettle, plated candlesticks, and other articles subsequently set down in the catalogue of the auctioneer who disposed of them after Goldsmith's death. He also ordered a suit of mulberry clothes lined with silk and having gold buttons, which cost him nine pounds seven ; gave many dinners and suppers to his friends ; mirthful parties to the children whom he loved, for whom he would play the flute, conjure, put the back of his wig over his face to amuse them, play blind man's buff with them,

and join in their dances; he himself a child among children whose laughter and fleet footsteps greatly interfered with the peace of his neighbour in the chambers beneath, Mr. Blackstone, as he wrote his famous Commentaries. Nor did Goldsmith in the hour of his prosperity forget the several widows, poor housekeepers, and indigent authors, to whom in his days of poverty when he had no money to give, he had sent clothes, meat from his table, and sometimes the whole of his breakfast when he would say to himself, "Now let me only suppose I have eaten a much heartier breakfast than usual."

Spending his money in such ways he was soon in debt, and obliged to request loans from the publishers for whom he was compiling such books as his "Roman History," "History of England," and "History of Animated Nature," which Johnson predicted he would make as interesting as a Persian tale. But while occupied in this way he was writing and polishing his poem, the "Deserted Village, Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's Head, in Catherine Street, Strand, May 26, 1770." So far it was the most successful of all his literary efforts, for the deep underlying tenderness of its simple philosophy, the charm of its pastoral pictures perfect in their subdued tone, its polished diction, gained it immediate recognition, and within three months of its issue it had passed into five editions, was read everywhere, quoted by all

lovers of literature, universally lauded, and in due time translated into French and German.

The poem was dedicated by the author to his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds in brief but effective words which said: "Setting interest aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you." That Reynolds felt gratified and honoured by this proof of attachment and esteem we have proof, for selecting from the poem a subject for a picture, he painted it, had it engraved under his own direction, and inscribed beneath it the words, "This attempt to express a character in the 'Deserted Village' is dedicated to Doctor Goldsmith by his sincere friend and admirer Joshua Reynolds." It may here be added that it was in the latter part of the previous year (1769) that Reynolds painted the portrait of Goldsmith which he kept for himself, but that eventually passed into the possession of the Duke of Dorset. Of this, which was said to be an excellent likeness, he made a copy for the Thrales, which when sold by auction in 1816, was bought by the Duke of Bedford for one hundred and thirty-three pounds seven shillings.

Pleasant incidents in life had also befallen another member of the Club, "the big man," as Goldsmith

playfully called Johnson. The first of these came through Lord Bute, who being stung by the constant and bitter reproaches of the press relating to the abuse of his power in heaping favours and honours on his own countrymen of every trade, profession, and position, to the exclusion of other subjects of His Majesty, believed he might disarm such attacks and gain credit for liberality if he granted a pension to so notable a man as Johnson, the compiler of a great dictionary, a philosopher, an essayist, and a man of letters who not only by his ability but by his character had raised his calling to a respect it had never known before. It was however doubtful as to whether or not a pension would be acceptable to one who in his dictionary had described a pensioner as "a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey his master," and who heartily disliked the Scotch, "the needy adventurers, many of whom he thought were advanced above their merits by means which he did not approve," as it is put by Boswell, who did not consider himself to be included in this category.

To find what his feelings on the matter would be, Thomas Sheridan, schoolmaster, player, theatrical manager, lecturer, and father of the author of the "School for Scandal," was commissioned to tell Johnson that a pension would be granted him. At the first intimation of such news, Johnson—who was obliged to borrow continually from Reynolds, to beg

of Smollett to bail him when he had been arrested for debt, and who was not always free from the fear of being clapped on the shoulder by a bailiff—in a "fervour of gratitude" called out "The English language does not afford me terms adequate to my feelings on this occasion. I must have recourse to the French. I am *pénétré* with His Majesty's goodness."

On reflection, however, he was uncertain whether or not it became him to accept a pension after the definition he had given that word in his dictionary, and he therefore called on Joshua Reynolds to lay the matter before him, and beg that he would give it his consideration and return his answer next day. To this the painter replied that he could honestly give his opinion at once; that there was no objection to his receiving from the King a reward for literary merit; and that certainly the definitions in his dictionary were not applicable to himself. Johnson had no difficulty in perceiving the wisdom of his friend, never so clearly and admirably shown as then, and he therefore wrote to Lord Bute, 20 July, 1762, telling him he had been informed of the future favours which His Majesty had, by his lordship's recommendation, been induced to intend for him, and continuing, said:—

"Bounty always receives part of its value from the manner in which it is bestowed; your Lordship's

kindness includes every circumstance that can gratify delicacy or enforce obligation. You have conferred your favours on a man who has neither alliance nor interest, who has not merited them by services nor courted them by officiousness; you have spared him the shame of solicitation and the anxiety of suspense. What has been thus elegantly given, will I hope not be reproachfully enjoyed; I shall endeavour to give your Lordship the only recompense which generosity desires; the gratification of finding that your benefits are not improperly bestowed. I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant."

Though he had been told that the first payment of this pension would be made at Michaelmas, yet that season came and went without making him anything the richer; so that in the following November he felt obliged to remind Lord Bute of his promise, adding to his letter a paragraph worthy of quoting as showing the height above his hated countrymen, to which one may rise in estimation, who had it in his power to grant favours. "To interrupt your Lordship," it says, "at a time like this, with such petty difficulties is improper and unreasonable; but your knowledge of the world has long since taught you that every man's affairs however little, are important to himself. Every man hopes that he shall escape neglect; and with reason may every man whose vices do not preclude

his claim, expect favour from that beneficence which has been extended to, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged, most humble servant."

As his affection for the Stuarts was well known, and his want of loyal feeling towards their successors strongly suspected, many reflections were made on Johnson for accepting a favour from George III, especially a favour which took the shape of a pension that placed him in the lists of those he had described as hired slaves. At such however he was philosophic enough to laugh, saying that he wished his pension were twice as large, so that those who objected to his taking it might make twice as much noise. And when Boswell, who sounded him on every subject touched on this, Johnson's reply was, "Why sir, it is a mighty foolish noise that they make. I have accepted of a pension as a reward which has been thought due to my literary merit; and now I have this pension, I am the same man in every respect that I have ever been; I retain the same principles. It is true that I cannot now curse (smiling) the House of Hanover; nor would it be decent for me to drink King James's health in the wine that King George gives me money to pay for. But sir, I think that the pleasure of cursing the House of Hanover and drinking King James's health, are amply balanced by three hundred pounds a year."

The addition of this sum to his earnings gave him

not only relief, but a satisfaction in being able to help many whose real or pretended wants excited his compassion; and from this time he always put some loose money in his pockets to give to the beggars, a practice he recommended his friends to follow. When they assured him that those to whom he gave charity laid it out on gin and tobacco, his answer was, "And why should they be denied such sweeteners of their existence? It is surely very savage to refuse them every possible avenue to pleasure, reckoned too coarse for our own acceptance. Life is a pill which none of us can bear to swallow without gilding; yet for the poor we delight in stripping it still barer, and are not ashamed to show even visible displeasure if ever the bitter taste is taken from their mouths."

As a result of his tenderness to the unfortunate, he sheltered many of them under his roof. One of these was Robert Levett, an Englishman by birth, who drifting to Paris, became a waiter in a coffee-house greatly frequented by surgeons. They finding him intelligent and interested in their profession, gave him instructions, made a purse for him, procured him free admission to lectures on anatomy and pharmacy, and fitted him to become in his own estimation, a medical practitioner in London, where he attended the poor in Houndsditch and received fees proportionate to his skill. Becoming acquainted with Johnson, he was engaged to wait on him every morn-

ing at his late breakfasts, the great man believing to such an extent in his skill that he declared he would not be satisfied, "though attended by all the College of Physicians, unless he had Mr. Levett with him." Levett—a man of grotesque appearance, of stiff and formal manner, silent and sombre—married at the age of sixty, a woman who assured him she was nearly related to a man of fortune who kept her out of a great property. Four months after his union he was enlightened about her antecedents by rude bailiffs, who dispelled his illusions and arrested him for her debts. Some kindness towards her husband must have touched her heart, as she ran away from him, thus adding another chapter to a romance compared with which Johnson used to say, the marvels of the "Arabian Nights" seemed familiar occurrences. As Levett was poor and miserable, that, as Goldsmith said, was sufficient to ensure the protection of Johnson, who gave him a room in his garret where the unfortunate man lived for twenty years, and up to the time of his death.

A more interesting individual who also had free quarters in Johnson's house was Miss Williams, "the daughter of a very ingenious Welsh physician," an elderly gentlewoman whose loss of sight was said to have led her to make much use of her ears, and who is described as possessing unbounded curiosity. Pale and shrunken, her sightless eyes wide open,

dressed in scarlet, with a lace cap having two stiffened projecting wings at the temples, and a black lace hood over it, she made tea in her own apartments, for Johnson and the friends he invited; her manner of discovering if the cups were sufficiently full being to put a finger down inside the cup until it touched the tea. None could repeat with better memory Johnson's wise maxims or lead him more skilfully into conversation, for she had a retentive memory and a good judgment, to which was added a fiery temper, often excited by "some of the meaner intimates of the upper floors."

Ease having been given by the royal pension to Johnson's circumstances in his fifty-third year, fate added honours; for in October, 1765, he was surprised to receive from Trinity College, Dublin, a diploma of Doctor of Law—an honour which his own University of Oxford did not think well of conferring on him for some ten years later. But that which gave him far greater satisfaction, and that is spoken of by his biographer Boswell, as "one of the most remarkable incidents of Johnson's life, which gratified his monarchical enthusiasm, and which he loved to relate with all its circumstances when requested by his friends," was his unexpected meeting and conversation with the King—an account of which Boswell not only embodied in the biography of his hero, but thought of sufficient importance to publish separately,

with observations by himself, the whole occupying two pages and costing a guinea and a half.

On George III taking possession of Buckingham House, he had employed a man of some learning named Barnard to form a library. In doing so the latter had consulted Johnson, who in return was given permission to visit the library where he found many rare and curious volumes not accessible to him elsewhere. Hearing of these visits, the King, anxious to see a man of whom he had heard much, told Barnard to let him know when Johnson next came to Buckingham House. It happened, therefore, that one afternoon in February, 1767, when the great man, slightly bent, stick in hand, came rolling and muttering into the library, Barnard gave him the volumes he required, placed him in a comfortable chair by a roaring fire, and then quietly went to the royal apartments and told the King that his distinguished subject was at that moment under his roof. At that His Majesty rose, and being lighted through a suite of gloomy rooms, by a solitary wax candle held by the librarian, entered the library where Johnson was absorbed in his book. To him Barnard went quickly, and bending down whispered him: "Sir, the King is here."

Johnson greatly surprised but not confused, stood up and bowed as gracefully as his burly figure would permit, while His Majesty, tall, stately, and shy, with florid face and protruding blue eyes devoid of specu-

lation, advanced, and in a courteous, easy manner began to put a series of questions to him; interrogation being the general form of his conversations. These questions covered a wide ground. Was he not fond of going to Oxford; what were they doing there; whether there were better libraries at Oxford or Cambridge; what did he think of Lord Lyttelton's "History"; what was his opinion of Dr. Hill; were there any literary journals published in the kingdom besides the Monthly and Critical Reviews; which of them was the better; and was he writing anything at that moment. To that Johnson who spoke to His Majesty "with profound respect but still in his firm, manly manner, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room," answered he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to acquire more knowledge, to which the King replied: "I do not think you borrow much from anybody." At that Johnson said he thought he had already done his part as a writer. "I should have thought so too if you had not written so well," commented His Majesty, much to the delight of his hearer, who afterwards used to say: "No man could have paid a handsomer compliment, and it was fit for a king to pay. It was decisive"; and on being asked if he made any reply to this high eulogy, his answer was: "No, sir. When the King had said it, it was to

From a mezzotint, after the picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

GEORGE III. IN HIS CORONATION ROBES.

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be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my Sovereign."

Finally His Majesty expressed a desire to have the literary biography of his country ably executed, and proposed that it should be undertaken by Johnson, who declared his readiness to comply with his wishes; but as he heard nothing further of the King's interest in the subject, the work was never undertaken. The King then withdrew. Though Johnson had been a Jacobite, yet his receipt of a pension and his being honoured by the attention of his sovereign, were sufficient to soften his prejudices and to show him the benefits to be derived from living under so liberal a monarch; so that when George III had left him, Johnson in a state of jubilation said to the librarian: "Sir, they may talk of the King as they will, but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen." Later he remarked to his friend Bennet Langton in speaking of this interview with His Majesty: "Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second"—a statement that led John Wilson Croker to write: "This reminds us of Madame de Sevigné's charming *naïveté*, when after giving an account of Louis XIV having danced with her, she adds: 'Ah, c'est le plus grand roi du monde.'"

Already distinguished, Johnson now became an object of wonder and awe as an author who had

spoken with the King. Whether at the houses of his friends, at the Club in Gerrard Street, or at the taverns, people were as anxious to hear about his interview with royalty as he was willing to relate it. Boswell tells us of a circle that collected around the great man at Sir Joshua's to hear an account of the memorable conversation, one member of which Dr. Warton, expressed the wishes of the others by saying, "Come now, sir, this is an interesting matter, do favour us with it," when with much good humour Johnson complied, telling them among other things, "I found His Majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his Sovereign." The same authority, Boswell, who when possible never omits to speak slightingly of Goldsmith, tells us that during Johnson's narration the former sat on a sofa at some distance quite unmoved, and affecting to have no part in the eager curiosity of the company. "He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention," writes Boswell in the sententious language by which he strove to imitate the man on whose society he had forced himself, whose footsteps he dogged, and whose words he jotted down in his diary, "that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a prologue to his play." But Boswell strongly suspected that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honour his friend

had enjoyed. He, however, does Goldsmith the justice to admit the frankness and simplicity of his character, which led him to spring from the sofa, advance to Johnson, "and in a kind of flutter from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed, 'Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done, for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it.'"

This was the sole interview His Majesty had with Johnson, who says Northcote, if he had been a buffoon or a sycophant, would have asked for others, adding shrewdly enough, "There was nothing to complain of; it was a compliment paid by rank to letters, and once was enough. The King was more afraid of the interview than Dr. Johnson was, and went to it as a schoolboy to his task. But he did not want to have this trial repeated every day, nor was it necessary. The very jealousy of his self-love marked his respect; and if he had thought less of Dr. Johnson, he would have been more willing to risk the encounter. They had each their place to fill, and would best preserve their self-respect and perhaps their respect for each other by remaining in their proper spheres."

An occurrence which happened in the affairs of another member of the Club gave his friends much interest. During the autumn of 1767 Topham Beauclerk had absented himself from the social

meetings of the "Turk's Head," which his wit had often brightened; for his name was at that time associated with that of the Viscountess Bolingbroke, eldest daughter of Charles, third Duke of Marlborough. To all others but her husband the lady seemed handsome and agreeable, and to none more so than to Topham Beauclerk. And as she liked him far better than the husband from whom she had separated, she presented him with a child—an action that caused the jealous Lord Bolingbroke to petition Parliament for a divorce. Two days after this had been granted, she married at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, Topham Beauclerk, when they rented a house in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, where they received much good company, and where Lady Diana Beauclerk, as she then became, "being ingenious far beyond the ordinary rate," received high praise from Reynolds for her talent as a painter, though all the charm of her conversation did not prevent Johnson from treating her with cold civility.

END OF VOL. I

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